

# MY RANDOM MUSINGS

By

**Engr. Aung Kyaw Thein**  
Director  
Consolidated Services Ltd.  
Dhaka  
Bangladesh

email: [thein@csldhaka.com](mailto:thein@csldhaka.com)  
[theinamay@yahoo.com](mailto:theinamay@yahoo.com)  
mobile phone: +88 01713 206308

**I AM BORN WITH THE OBLIGATION TO DO HONOUR TO MY PARENTS, MY FOREFATHERS, MY SOCIETY, MY RACE AND MY COUNTRY; AND I HAVE THE RIGHT OF LIBERTY TO DO SO. I AM BORN WITH NO OTHER RIGHTS.**

## LIVING BEYOND MEANS

Mr. Husband and Mrs. Wife were a couple running, like any other couple, the affairs of their family by mutual consent (One Party System). They have five children; Master Twelve, Master Ten, Miss Eight, Miss Seven & Master Four. Husband and Wife both work and earn reasonable amounts; Husband is working as a bank officer and Wife as a marketing executive in a small private company. The children all go to school. The family finances were within their income.

Wife becomes conscious that Husband is having more say in running the house and so she protests. After a week of arguing and sulking they both decide that the one voted by the children will run the family for a term of one year to be followed by voting for the next term (Multi-Party Democracy). The children were consulted and each of them saw opportunities for themselves. So many things the rich kids had which they didn't - cannot even dream of - will now become real for them.

Husband and Wife now turn their attention to the children for getting their vote. They started by appealing to their sense of devotion and followed by various reasons why he or she is the best person to run the house. The children came up with various needs. Twelve and Ten wanted cycle and a laptops, Eight and Seven wanted new fancy dresses and make-ups and perfumes whilst Four wanted expensive toys. Husband and Wife promised all the children asked for. Using guile and extra promises Wife won the first voting. Having won the right to run the house Wife started to fulfill the promises made to the children. Meantime prices of essentials went up and she found she could not manage to give all she had promised to the children within their family income. Now she brooded for some days and said to herself "what the heck! I'll borrow from banks and from my parents". So she borrowed from bank at the going interest rate and from her parents at interest free. Still she could not give all she promised and Ten, Eight & Seven were unhappy.

At the end of the year Husband, having lost the last time, was more liberal with his promises. The children, possessing instinctive intellect, lost no time assessing the situation and their demands increased. Eight was not happy to share a room with Seven and demanded separate rooms. Twelve and Ten had their own demands. Four more expensive toys, those he had seen in his richer friends' houses. This time around Wife's guile and promises fell short and Husband was voted to run the house. He has to change to a bigger house, to accommodate Eight and Seven separately, and found the family's income short. He brooded for some time and after awhile said to himself "I'll borrow from bank and my own parents". So he borrowed but still fell short of meeting all the promises he had made. This time Twelve and Seven were unhappy.

At the end of that year Husband and Wife again lost no time in appealing to the children. Now Twelve, who was sharing a room with Ten, was unhappy and he wanted a separate room. Twelve, Ten, Eight & Seven wanted each wanted a television to themselves. Four now wanted a bicycle. Wife, having learnt from her last year's mistake, promises much more and is voted to run the house. Now the demands were more expensive, and what with rise in gasoline prices, etc. she fell well short. So the borrowing from bank and her parents became unavoidable and so she borrowed amounts bigger than before.

This system has been continuing for last ten years, at the end of which - new large house, expensive cars, etc. - Husband and Wife find that the family owed 85% of their annual income to the banks (external debt) and 70% of their annual earnings to their parents (public debt). This year Wife has been voted to run the house and the demands have multiplied.

So you think now I am kidding! People cannot be that foolish!

Am I?

Look up “list of countries by external debt” and “list of countries by public debt” in Google.

COUNTRIES	GDP In Trillion \$	EXTERNAL DEBT		PUBLIC DEBT	
		% of GDP	Amount in Trillion \$	% of GDP	Amount in Trillion \$
USA	15.72	99.00	15.57	94.36	14.83
EU Countries	16.22	85.00	13.79	83.31	13.51

Greece has just gone bust. It's GDP, external and public debts were (in Billion \$) 305, 532 & 348 respectively.

Greece is not alone! Ireland, Spain, Portugal & Italy will be following soon.

Recently a renowned economist from Germany aptly summed up the cause of the crisis :  
THESE COUNTRIES HAVE LIVED BEYOND THEIR MEANS.

### **LIVING BEYOND MEANS – PART 2**

The table below shows the financial statistics of the western countries (multi-party democracies).

COUNTRY	GDP in Billion \$	FOREX in Billion \$	EXTERNAL DEBT in Billion \$	PUBLIC DEBT in Billion \$
EU Countries	16,242	925	13,720	12,993
USA	14,526	146	15,571	13,706
Germany	3,286	263	4,713	2,758
France	2,562	185	4,698	2,109
UK	2,250	124	8,981	1,699
Italy	2,055	187	2,223	2,445
Spain	1,410	49	2,166	846
Netherlands	780	56	2,344	496
Poland	469	100	253	258
Belgium	468	31	1,241	454
Sweden	459	50	853	184
Greece	305	7	533	435
Portugal	229	24	497	213
Ireland	207	2	2,378	197

(source : Wikipedia & CIA fact book)

Like Husband and Wife after ten years of multi-party democracy practice, all the above countries are heavily in debt – debt to other countries and debt to their own citizens. THEY HAVE BEEN LIVING BEYOND THEIR MEANS!

How will these countries ever achieve a balance of FOREX with their External Debt? Not to speak of paying back the money borrowed from their own citizens!

Over the many years none of these countries have ever been able to give a balanced budget; i.e., expenditure equal to income and trade balance. Deficit budgeting has been the norm.

Countries like China, India, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Brazil, Mexico and other developing countries have taken over many of the fields of production these countries held monopolies until recently. Forty years back nobody believed that the developing countries could ever build a car even! Textile sector where once European countries - especially Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Netherlands – dominated, have gone from them forever. Korea, China, India and Brazil are challenging them in technological products. Production of cars, computers, chips, mobile, industrial machinery, high-tech process equipments, electronic equipments, etc. have shifted to the east. Clothing is now produced entirely by the eastern countries. Technology is no longer a stranger to Asian, African and Latin American countries. High technology process plants, critical equipment for petrochemical and fertilizer plants, large civil constructions (bridges, sky-scrapers) and electronic equipment are no longer the exclusive fields of the western countries. Korean, Chinese and Indian companies are competing with the western companies for high value prestigious projects in the middle-east. The IT sector in India has developed to the extent that, to remain competitive, western companies are obliged to outsource IT services from Indian companies like TCS, Infosys & Wipro. The turnover in outsourcing fetches India US\$ 78 billion. Samsung of Korea is competing with the best from the western world in mobile phones, semi-conductors and electronics.

How then will these countries ever pay their external debts and achieve trade balance and balanced budget! One set of politicians and economists (the least trust-worthy people in the world) tell us that the answer is to cut taxes to fuel growth whilst another set of politicians and economists say just the opposite. There is no economic or financial answer.

Let us look back into history. From the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century the western countries conquered, by force or by treachery & guile, and colonized countries in Asia and Africa. They had all the resources (oil, gas & raw materials) of these colonized countries for their taking peanut prices. Industries sprung up in Europe to process the raw resources taken from colonized countries into products which were then exported to those same countries from where the raw materials came at thousand-fold prices. Indians were forbidden to produce and consume salt that was there from the sea. Bengal produced all the jute of the world and Lancashire became the capital of jute! In America the European settlers killed the native people and claimed their land with all its resources. They raided African countries and enslaved the people and brought them to America to do work on the cotton fields at no charge. History is replete with atrocities committed by these western countries to gain control of the world's resources.

After the end of World War II the western countries were obliged to give up their colonies. Resources of these countries were no longer available for their taking. Excepting, of course, USA where there were no longer sufficient numbers of the native peoples left alive. USA still had all the resources of North America for themselves. Then again USA's coffers were filled with the gold brought over by the Jews, and also non-Jews, from Europe during the course of the war in Europe. By early nineties Europe and USA had grown to become large industrialized nations with strong economies. Industrial trade organizations, that served their purpose, were imposed on the whole world. Thus from early nineties till late nineties the western countries enjoyed monopoly in international trade. But when OPEC was formed and oil & gas rich countries started to nationalize these resources the economies of the western world start to hurt. Meantime other countries - led by Korea, China, Taiwan, India, Brazil and to a lesser degree by Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Latin countries – had been working

hard to industrialize and gain a fairer share of the international trade. Today the tide has turned.

So how will the western countries recover their lost glory, prosperity & power? Answer : GAIN CONTROL OF THE WORLDS RESOURCES AGAIN – BY HOOK OR BY CROOK!

What are the factors and means to achieve this? The factors they are looking forward are the following:

1. Technological superiority
2. Media propaganda.
3. Puppet governments.
4. Internet
5. Religion.
6. Internal strife.
7. Illusion of the younger generation.
8. Currency manipulation.
9. Organizations like United Nations, WTO, etc.

### **Technological superiority**

No one can doubt the western worlds' superiority in technology. These countries will continue producing people like Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, etc. who will dominate the IT world. But the contribution of technological inventions and innovations will decline in respect to GDP. Technological superiority will go some way, but not the whole way to solve their financial inequities.

### **Media Propaganda**

Media is a very powerful weapon to influence peoples' perspectives. The western countries have always used the media to propagate news and idea to their benefit. Few days back I was listening to a discussion on BBC and the topic was on the European financial crisis and its impact on China. The analyst while giving his expert opinion elaborated that China's growth would likely to slow down from previous nine percent to perhaps below eight percent and that the middle and lower class people could be affected. The moderator of the program then had the cheek to very slyly suggest whether this would lead to an uprising amongst the people. All the western media have always played on the listeners' minds. Countries, which the western countries do not like, are accused of violating human rights. But did you know that UK is preparing to pass into law where the government would monitor all your emails, telephone calls, etc? If China did that the whole western media would have taken up arms and indicted China for violating human liberties! Who has given the right for western countries to claim "international calls, international community" to endorse their position?

### **Puppet governments**

Few countries today are not influenced by the western world. However some countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE are entirely dependent. These countries buy billions of dollars worth of weapons and take up fantasy projects worth another billions of dollars where the chief financial beneficiaries are the western world. They have threatened Syria, an Islamic country like themselves, to give with financial and armed assistance to the opposition, a group of mercenaries promoted by the west.

## **Internet**

Internet is the most powerful tool by which the western world is influencing the minds of the peoples of the other countries. Facebook, twitter, blogging and its like, are hijacking the minds of the younger generations to the western way of thinking.

## **Religion & Race**

Religion is has always been used by the western countries to subdue other people and countries and lands. The pilgrim fathers sailed to America and indulged in genocide that led almost to the extinction of the native American people. They went to Australia and took away the lands from the aborigines. Till today the Australian constitution says that an aborigine is not fit and therefore not entitled to own land. Wherever the white conquerors went so too Christian priests and they took the natives lands in exchange for the bible!

The middle east, with all its vast resources of oil & gas, is of immense interest to the western countries. Whoever controls this area controls the energy supply to the world. Today USA and the UK are using the divide in Muslim religion in Sunni and Shia sects for them to become the masters of this area. They have already divided Iraq into Sunni, Shia and Kurds and this country will always be in perpetual strife with USA as the puppeteer pulling the strings. The oil & gas resources are, of course, under their control. Now Syria, where the population is largely Sunni but ruled by Shia, is the target and their puppets, Saudi Arabia and UAE are their collaborators. If they succeed then the whole region, including Lebanon, will be fighting sectarian wars. Iran cannot be allowed to possess nuclear arms, even though Israel has so, because then it will become a regional power. In that case Saudi Arabia and UAE will have to bow to their strength and the western countries hold on the regions resources will be constrained.

Whilst the western world is fighting so called Islamic terrorism they are using Islamic extremist minorities in other countries to ferment insurgencies. In China the Muslims in Xinjiang are encouraged to call for a separate state. Christians in China are encouraged and helped to become dissidents. Buddhists in Tibet are encouraged to call for freedom of Tibet. In all these cases The western world are covertly giving helping hand. They are supporting terrorists in the Philippines, Thailand & Myanmar.

The western countries imposing Religious politics is of particular significance. This is the richest region in terms of oil & gas. Iran is an obstacle and the western countries can never gain complete control of the region if Iran has nuclear power. A nuclear-armed Iran would be different proposition to conquer than Iraq. The reason given by them for banning Iran from having nuclear arms is that nuclear arms in Iran's hands would be dangerous to the region; implying Iran would not hesitate to use it on its neighbors to subdue the whole region. Then there are the paranoid Jews! I beseech your patience to digress a bit here.

- Who fought two world wars?
- Who enslaved people of other countries?
- Who introduce apartheid?
- Who annihilated (committed genocide) on the American natives?
- Who caused the famine in 1877-78 in India when "at the pain of imprisonment private relief donations that potentially interfered with the market fixing of grain price"
- Who massacred thousands of people in the Sepoy Mutiny?
- Remember the Calcutta "Black Hole"?
- Who forbade from aborigines from owning land in their own country?
- Who perpetuated the "holocaust"?

- Who fought the “Opium War” to allow the Chinese to consume opium to their full? Why forbid cocaine and other drugs from free trade now?
- Who called Gandhiji “half naked fakir”?

The list of atrocities and forced occupations by these western countries goes on and on. Remember the present white generation are progenies of the barbarians who committed all the crimes above and much, much more.

### **Internal Strife**

Whenever and wherever there is an internal strife in a country the western world have never been shy from supporting one the other of the parties where its interest is more.

### **Currency Manipulation**

The US dollar has been, still is and will remain so for a long time, the currency of international trade. USA has never been shy to use this strength in international trade to manipulate the exchange rates to its favour. USA has the power to print more dollars which is officially the international trading currency!

### **Organizations like UN & WTO**

These organizations are puppets who echo the master's voice. The western countries have always used these organizations to serve their purpose all of the time. Who or what authority has the UN to say what countries can have or cannot have such and such weapons? Who gave the UN to sanctify all the atrocities committed by the western countries. Where was UN when the western countries attacked and captured Iraq. That wasn't a war. A war is fought between two countries with similar armed strength! Boon Kim Moon is merely a puppet singing to western tunes.



## AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

At every opportunity American politicians: senators, presidents and aspiring presidential candidates; allude to "The American Way of Life". It is understood that this refers to a nationalistic ethos that purports to adhere to the principles of "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness".

### LIFE

This presumably signifies respect for human life. Before Columbus discovered(?) America in 1492 and white settlers started migrating from Europe to America in 1600, the population of the peoples then inhabiting America is estimated to be from 50 to 100 million. Today this number has been reduced to 2.5 million in USA, 1.5 million in Canada, 10 million in Mexico and around 43 million in South America; a total of 48 millions. What happened to the native population then? The Pope then decreed that the natives were animals without souls and could be hunted and killed like animals; and the whites did exactly that with relish and pleasure. So much to white America's respect for natives lives.

On 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945, when the Japanese troops were in full retreat and the fall of Japan was imminent, America dropped the first ever atom bomb in Hiroshima killing thousands of Japanese civilians and maiming many more others for life; the effects still carried over to their children. Remember, this atom bomb had never been tested and the extent of the damages it would cause still unknown. This bomb could have wiped Japan off the map! The American rational was that it would hasten the Japanese surrender, thereby saving American soldiers. Bravo, the Americans do care for the lives of the American whites. Three days later, on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1945 America dropped the second atom bomb on the Japanese city of Nagasaki, to force Japan to surrender immediately to America rather than surrender to Russia whose troops were closing in on Japan from the north. So much to white America's respect for Japanese lives.

During the Vietnam war America resorted to chemical warfare and dropped thousands of tons of Napalm and Agent Orange. Recall the photograph of the little naked Vietnamese girl running with her back on fire from Napalm? So much to white America's respect for Vietnamese lives.

White America's respect for human lives in Afghanistan and Iraq has been rubbished in Wikileaks. Today white America is pursuing and killing so-labeled Talibans with their drones like animals. So much to white America's respect for Muslim lives.

### LIBERTY

Oh yes! White Americans love liberty. They love the liberty that permitted them to kill the natives, Japanese, Vietnamese and Muslims.

America loves its citizens so much, that to protect their liberty they put other citizens in jail. America tops the world rankings in prisoners per capita at 715 persons per 100,000 persons. Compare that with totalitarian China at 119 persons per 100,000 persons.

### PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Disaster! USA ranks 105 in the world's happiest countries rankings.

Oh yes! Americans pursue happiness so much that it has the highest per capita gays and lesbians at 3.5%.

**GOD BLESS AMERICA FOR SHE NEEDS YOUR BLESSINGS THE MOST.**

## PEACE IN THE HUMAN WORLD

Human beings, as man that we call today, allegedly walked out of Africa some 50,000 years ago in three different times. Today scientists refer to them as caucasoids, mongoloids and negroids.

There is no record to know how these few men evolved through these 50,000 years to the civilization that we know today.

However, considered from macro aspect, we can take a rough guess.

50,000 years ago these men must have lived in tiny communities as they fanned out across the world. Survival would have been extremely challenging; competing against animal and nature. Many aspects of nature: sun, moon, lightning, thunder, rain, etc. Would have perplexed their mind. Their brains would have been small and they would not have the language to co-relate the mental functions of the brain. They would have relied on intuition, rather than intelligence.

Over the years the communities would have grown larger and there would be people who would contend to interpret nature; medicine man, shaman, witch doctor, healers and spiritual leaders. When the community has tiny each head of the family would fend for his family. But as communities grew in size there would be need to have community leadership. The type of such leadership would be individual leader or elder leaders taking decisions.

During this sojourn of thousands of years the environment they survived would have had profound effect on their structure, colour and on their nervous system.

I would refer the reader to look up in the internet this journey of our ancestors:

[www.timemaps.com/history/](http://www.timemaps.com/history/)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/europe](http://www.timemaps.com/history/europe)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/south-asia](http://www.timemaps.com/history/south-asia)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/east-asia](http://www.timemaps.com/history/east-asia)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/middle-east](http://www.timemaps.com/history/middle-east)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/africa](http://www.timemaps.com/history/africa)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/south-east-asia](http://www.timemaps.com/history/south-east-asia)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/oceania](http://www.timemaps.com/history/oceania)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/south-america](http://www.timemaps.com/history/south-america)  
[www.timemaps.com/history/north-america](http://www.timemaps.com/history/north-america)

A journey into the history of mankind tells us that there has been an intermingling, mixing, fusion and integration of social cultures; from the tiny community to the present national cultures. Within every nation there has been this intermingling, mixing, fusion and integration of the first cultures from the tiny communities to present nations and regions. In some nations the individual cultures have totally disappeared whilst in others they are still prominent. Even today there exists hundreds of communities clinging to their ancestral cultures and traditions; we designate them as indigenous or tribals.

Neuro-anthropologists tell us that our brain and nervous system are our cultural organs. While virtually all parts of the body, skeleton, muscles, joints bear the stamp of our behavioral variety, our nervous system is especially immature at birth, our brain disproportionately small in relation to its adult size and disproportionately susceptible to

culture sculpturing. Our first year of life finds our brain developing as if in utero, immersed in language, social interaction. This immersion means that our ideas about ourselves and how we want to raise our children affect the environmental niche in our nervous system unfolds, influencing gene expression and development processes to the cellular level.

Neuroscientists are finding evidence of functional differences in brain activity and architecture between cultural groups, occupations, and individuals with different skill sets.

Neuro-anthropologists and neuroscientists both tell us that a man becomes a person that he is by growing up in particular community, learning to speak the language, and to participate the life in the community. There must be some community for him to grow up in, if he is to become a person and a human being at all. The community he grows up makes an important difference. If his native community had been different, in all important respects he would be a different person from the one he has in fact become. So would many of the ideas, beliefs and values in terms of which he has been brought up to think and act. He is always a product of some social and cultural heritage. Different traditions and cultures and civilizations are different ways of being a human being.

With such a variation of cultures, both within a nation and with other nations, there is bound to be conflicts arising out of our different cultural heritages.

Not all of today's nations are evolved from same cultural identities. Many European nations are; but national boundaries in Africa and Asia were imposed upon them by their former colonial masters. Africa is a pitiable example where the whites categorized all blacks as same and formed the boundary lines of these nations in Africa on longitudinal and latitudinal lines!

The concept of an integrated single national culture is forlorn dream. Rather, such attempts result in un-culturing human beings; thereby undoing the knot that our human culture has sewn the fabric of our society – sundering the human bondage. We all agree that big cities dehumanize persons. The person no longer grows within a society; rather he grows within the confines of his apartment. Play-groups, kindergartens and schools are no substitutes; for here the stress is more on discipline and less on culture. An uncultured man does not belong to any society; he is likely to be self-seeking. Very often here people of substance calling for “bridging the cultural divide”. Although it is usually said in a positive and well-meaning sense, it is “non-sense”. The cultural divide is the divide of our mental functions (to which we have no control; a human being is the product of his mind and not the other way around). The same message can be expressed as “appreciation and tolerance of another's culture: his beliefs, values, etc.

India and Pakistan were divided on religious lines; for north east India the differing races and cultures were totally ignored. The seven sisters in the north east were integrated with india on the basis of administrative consideration.

The present civilization is based on capitalism and to sustain capitalism each country's economy must grow at the rate of minimum two percent; otherwise capitalism cannot be sustained. So nations must compete with other nations for the resources and markets. Energy is the one most vital element for a country's growth; but energy is not distributed uniformly country-wise. Oil is concentrated in the middle east and gas in Russia; with coal more evenly distributed. With oil and coal reserves predicted to finish within forty and sixty years respectively by knowledgeable sources, the competition is becoming bitter by the day. The two percent annual growth that we have set for ourselves is ticking like the sword of Damocles; it can neither be stopped nor reversed.

## **Religion has not been an answer to human integration and peace.**

Are the countries that possess nuclear arms trust-worthy? Remember united states of America dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima on 6<sup>th</sup> of august 1945, risking killing of thousands of civilians (at that time the atom bomb was untested and its power to kill still unknown) allegedly to save the lives of many American soldiers. Then the United States of America dropped the second atom bomb three days later on 9<sup>th</sup> august 1945 so Japan would need to surrender to America rather than to Russia whose troops were closing in on Japan from the North.

America celebrates its every successful space mission and the whole world applauds. Will mars be our second world when we have devastated this world, our earth?

Mr. Raylenesingh, a senior larrakia elder, the traditional aborigines of Australia wrote:

**“I am strong in my culture – the way I was taught by my mother and by my father and my grandmother and grandfather. We traditional owners know this land and how to look after it and we know what our country wants; and everything that lives – our people, the fish, the birds, the animals, insects, plants and landscape have to be looked after”.**

## HOMAGE TO THE MAN WHO SAVED THE WORLD

It is 00.01 hours the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2012 and it is my 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Today, the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2012 is also the 38<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of former UN Secretary General U Thant who served as General Secretary of the UN from 1961 to 1971.

I owe to U Thant, a self-effacing and honorable gentleman from Myanmar, that I am alive today to celebrate my 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday. So does all living persons of the world.

On 27<sup>th</sup> October 1962 the world averted a near nuclear holocaust that could have destroyed our world, thanks to this gentleman. On that day United States of America and the Soviet Union were on the verge of pressing their respective nuclear arsenal buttons. "Nuclear catastrophe was hanging by a thread ..... And we weren't counting days, or hours, but minutes" recounts Soviet General and Army Chief of Operations. The crisis began on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1962 when President Kennedy announced the discovery of Soviet missiles installations in Cuba and declared a quarantine of the island. The tension between the two countries and, by default, between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev, rose to a boiling point in the following few days. It was then, at that point, that U Thant stepped in, as the General Secretary of the UN, and actively mediated between the Kennedy and Khrushchev. Shortly after the blockade took effect October 24, when a naval conflict and an escalation to general war seemed likely, Thant took his first initiative. He successfully appealed to Kennedy and Khrushchev to allow time to resolve the crisis peacefully. This breathing space proved critical in allowing both leaders to face down their hardliners. Khrushchev turned back many of his ships, but kept others steaming to Cuba so as not to appear to back down entirely. Thant's initiative then prompted Kennedy to ask Thant to follow up with a more detailed appeal to Khrushchev to keep his ships away "for a limited time" so an agreement could be worked out.

Thant sent this second appeal as his own proposal so it would not appear as an American initiative. Coming as a request for moderation from the UN Secretary-General rather than as a demand from his adversary, Khrushchev readily accepted the proposal and used it to save face while keeping his remaining ships away. US Ambassador to the UN Adlai Stevenson later described Thant's action to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "At a critical moment – when the nuclear powers seemed set on a collision course – the Secretary-General's intervention led to the diversion of the Soviet ships headed for Cuba and interception by our Navy. This was the indispensable first step in the peaceful resolution of the Cuban crisis." Thant's went on to assist the parties deal with the two main issues of the conflict, namely the missiles in Cuba and Cuba's security concerns.

As is the case of politics, the two adversaries, Kennedy and Khrushchev were credited with averting this nuclear holocaust. U Thant's name appears nowhere in later official reports on the crisis.

U Thant died on 25<sup>th</sup> of November in 1974.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

Today the idea of human rights is paramount in world *politics*.

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights: UDHR) was proclaimed in a resolution of the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 as the “common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations”.

Human rights is a complex issue, as complex as the human mind, that need to take into account the diversity of human races, the varying traditional cultures, civilizations and beliefs. One would have to study the anthropology of the different races of humankind to get an understanding of the many traditional cultures, beliefs and philosophy of the many societies, communities and countries that comprise today's mankind. This is a vast subject left to the students of this discipline.

A man becomes the person and human being that he is by growing up in a particular community, learning to speak the language, and to participate in the life of the community. There must be some community for him to grow up in, if he is to become the person and, in more than purely zoological sense, a human being at all. The community he grows up makes an important difference. If his native community had been different, in all important respects he would be a different person from the one he has in fact become. So would many of the ideas, beliefs and values in terms of which he has been brought up to think and to act. He is always a *product* of some social and cultural milieu. Different traditions and cultures and civilizations are different ways of being human.

The idea of Human Rights which the authors of Universal Declaration of Human Rights had in mind was that of an ideal standard which every human community should try to teach. This and other Western Conventions make use of the idea of human rights, but in none of them is it analyzed and critically examined. The UDHR and other Western Conventions embody the values and institutions of modern liberal-democratic industrial society. This is not surprising, since their aims were practical and *political*, nor academic nor philosophical. Their authors assumed that the idea was straightforward.

But the majority of humanity do not live in such societies. Unfortunately this has been ignored by the authors. To many developing countries many of the rights set forth in the Declaration, despite its claim to universality, are simply irrelevant.

There is another objection to equating human rights with liberal-democratic and modern social-welfare rights. The particular values and institutions which these embody have their roots in the Western tradition of culture and civilization. But the Western is only one of a number of such cultures. Islamic, Hindu and the Buddhist cultures; each based upon great religions. Western civilization may be pre-eminent in science and technology, and in industry and commerce. But that does not justify erecting certain of its values, beliefs and institutions, with their associated rights, into a universal standard. West may be best for westerners; but to assume that it must be so for all humanity is arrogance. Such an ideal, with its constitutive values, beliefs and institutions, must, if it is to be coherent, be drawn from particular traditions of culture, belief and civilizations. Those who belong to different culture, beliefs and civilization have no reason to accept it.

It follows that human rights which belonged to all human beings at all times and in all places would be rights which they have as “de-socialized” and “de-culturized” beings. Since they are not, and cannot be such beings, there cannot be universal human rights.

Extract from: HUMAN RIGHTS and HUMAN DIVERSITY

An essay in the PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN RIGHTS by A.J.M. Milne (1986)

## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS – A CRITIQUE

Today the idea of human rights is paramount in world *politics*.

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights: UDHR) was proclaimed in a resolution of the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 as the “common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations”.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) errs on two accounts:

1. Not taking into the diversity of human race and the varying traditional cultures, civilizations and beliefs.
2. Not distinguishing the two components of Human Rights : Liberty Rights and Claim Rights.

### DIVERSITY OF HUMAN RACE

Human rights is a complex issue, as complex as the human mind, that need to take into account the diversity of human races, the varying traditional cultures, civilizations and beliefs. One would have to study the anthropology of the different races of humankind to get an understanding of the many traditional cultures, beliefs and philosophy of the many societies, communities and countries that comprise today's mankind. This is a vast subject left to the students of this discipline.

A man becomes the person and human being that he is by growing up in a particular community, learning to speak the language, and to participate in the life of the community. There must be some community for him to grow up in, if he is to become the person and, in more than purely zoological sense, a human being at all. The community he grows up makes an important difference. If his native community had been different, in all important respects he would be a different person from the one he has in fact become. So would many of the ideas, beliefs and values in terms of which he has been brought up to think and to act. He is always a *product* of some social and cultural milieu. Different traditions and cultures and civilizations are different ways of being human.

The idea of Human Rights which the authors of Universal Declaration of Human Rights had in mind was that of an ideal standard which every human community should try to teach. This and other Western Conventions make use of the idea of human rights, but in none of them is it analyzed and critically examined. The UDHR and other Western Conventions embody the values and institutions of modern liberal-democratic industrial society. This is not surprising, since their aims were practical and *political*, nor academic nor philosophical. Their authors assumed that the idea was straightforward.

But the majority of humanity do not live in such societies. Unfortunately this has been ignored by the authors. To many developing countries many of the rights set forth in the Declaration, despite its claim to universality, are simply irrelevant.

There is another objection to equating human rights with liberal-democratic and modern social-welfare rights. The particular values and institutions which these embody have their roots in the Western tradition of culture and civilization. But the Western is only one of a number of such cultures. Islamic, Hindu and the Buddhist cultures; each based upon great



religions. Western civilization may be pre-eminent in science and technology, and in industry and commerce. But that does not justify erecting certain of its values, beliefs and institutions, with their associated rights, into a universal standard. West may be best for westerners; but to assume that it must be so for all humanity is arrogance. Such an ideal, with its constitutive values, beliefs and institutions, must, if it is to be coherent, be drawn from particular traditions of culture, belief and civilizations. Those who belong to different culture, beliefs and civilization have no reason to accept it.

It follows that human rights which belonged to all human beings at all times and in all places would be rights which they have as “de-socialized” and “de-culturized” beings. Since they are not, and cannot be such beings, there cannot be universal human rights.

*Extract from: HUMAN RIGHTS and HUMAN DIVERSITY  
An essay in the PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN RIGHTS by A.J.M. Milne (1986)*

## LIBERTY RIGHTS AND CLAIM RIGHTS

The struggle for liberty rights dates back from the earliest known civilization still modern times when men and women struggled for liberty. A liberty right is a right which does not entail obligations on other parties, but rather only freedom or permission for the right holder. Through ages liberty rights has evolved during successive civilizations to conform to prevailing traditional and social cultures and practices, economic and political conditions of the concerned country. The eastern civilization places the harmony of society over individual liberty rights.

Alongside the liberty rights the claim rights also goes back to the cultures and communities. A claim right is a right which entails responsibilities, duties or obligations on other parties regarding the right holder. Like the individual has liberty right, society has a claim right to preserve traditional culture and to maintain harmony in the society.

Liberty rights and claim rights are the inverse of one another; a person has a liberty right permitting him to do something only if there is no other person who has a claim right forbidding the liberty right-holder from doing so; and likewise, if a person has a claim right against someone else, that other person's liberty is thus limited. Thus invoking a claim right limits the liberty right of the other party; and vice-versa.

**Now let us examine the articles of the UDHR:**

### Article 1.

- All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Conscience is a religious concept, particularly Christian religion. Today the population of the world comprises of:

Christians	: 35%
Muslims	: 23%
Hindus	: 14%

Buddhists : 06%  
Others : 22%  
(source : Wikipedia)

I do not know enough about Islam and Hinduism to comment their religious stance regarding conscience. Buddhists and others definitely do not subscribe to “endowed with conscience”. The proclamation claiming “universal” errs on this account.

## Article 2.

- Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Not to all those rights which are set forth in UDHR

The second part gives legal jurisdiction of the UN over all sovereign and non-sovereign countries of the world. This does not take into account the various traditional cultures and values of communities and societies that have evolved since the beginning of mankind. The UDHR embodies the values and institutions of modern liberal-democratic industrial society. This is not surprising, since their aims were practical and *political*, nor academic nor philosophical. Their authors assumed that the idea was straightforward.

## Article 3.

- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

No argument.

## Article 4.

- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

The Dutch brought in the first ship load of slaves forcibly captured from African countries and introduced slavery in North America in 1619. This was followed by millions of Africans captured from their countries and brought to America to serve as slaves to the white. It was not until the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution in 1865 that slavery was prohibited by law; 240 years of trade in slavery. (see “slavery in America” in Google [www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs\\_es\\_overview.htm](http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs_es_overview.htm)) What is the white man talking about in this article! Only 150 years back their forefathers saw it right to enslave other human beings. A few generations (150 years) do not wipe out the genetics the present generation of American whites.

The government and people of America owe an unconditional apology to all afro-Americans and the countries from where slaves were forcibly captured from. Until such an apology is forthcoming this article is a mockery to human intelligence.

#### **Article 5.**

- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The torture, inhuman and degrading treatment meted out to the hundreds of Afghan and Iraqi detainees in Guantanamo Bay, held without trial, makes nonsense of this article

#### **Article 6.**

- Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

"In the first few decades since 1492 (when Columbus landed in the Americas), it was thought that the Indians did not have souls because they were "animals" in human form. Therefore it was believed that they could be hunted down like animals. It was only in 1530 that the Pope declared that the Indians were human." ([freetruth.50webs.org/A4a.htm](http://freetruth.50webs.org/A4a.htm)).

The government and the people of America owe an unconditional apology to the Indians of America; until such an apology is forthcoming this article is a mockery to human intelligence.

Today the Americans are hunting down those whom they believe to belong to Al-Qaeda like animals simply because they oppose American imperialism. Are they not persons before law?

#### **Article 7.**

- All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

What is incitement? Is it not incitement to label such a country is totalitarian and thereby violates human rights and call for its citizens to rise against the government of that particular country.

#### **Article 8.**

- Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

This is better left to the Constitution of the concerned country

#### **Article 9.**

- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

No arguments

#### **Article 10.**

- Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

No arguments

## **Article 11.**

- (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
- (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Hundreds of Afghans (known to be Taliban) have been detained since 2002 in Guantanamo Bay without being charged for any penal offences. Bush administration asserted that these detainees were not entitled to any of the protections of the Geneva Conventions, manifesting that American law is above International law/conventions/treaties. What did these Afghans do to deserve this detention? Is it simply because they were labeled as Taliban? What is the fault in being a Taliban and to interpret the Quran as the Taliban do?

This is a toothless article that can be violated by the mighty at their will.

## **Article 12.**

- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

This is a liberty right.

.Modern governments are today performing mass surveillance of their citizens. For example the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has directly stated that “we are approaching a genuine surveillance society in the United States – a dark future where every move, transaction, our every communication is recorded, compiled and stored away, ready to be examined and used against us by the authorities whenever they want’. The UK government is in the process of legislating law whereby each citizen’s phone calls, emails, any and every form of communication will be monitored and recorded. Some words like “Mohammed”, “Islam”, “Khan”, etc. will immediately draw the attention to the people who monitor and be examined. The argument for this mass surveillance is that it is necessary to protect the citizens from dangerous groups such as terrorists, criminals, or political subversives and to maintain social order.

Here the right to liberty is violated on account of the need for “social order”.

This substance of this article is relative, like some of the other articles in UDHR, relative and should be left to each country’s exigency.

## **Article 13.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
- (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

No argument

#### **Article 14.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Who determines which acts are “contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations”?

#### **Article 15.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

The right to nationality is determined by each country's constitution and laws. There can be no international law on this issue.

#### **Article 16.**

- (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
- (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

These are social issues specific to each culture and the liberty right is constrained by traditional culture and society. The western white lives as an individual whilst we in the east prefer to live in social harmony and society takes preference over the individual. We obey our parents and teachers, respect our elders, care for each other and care for the society we live in. In other words we live a shared life. If anyone strays from social norms he must be restrained.

#### **Article 17.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Tell this to the Indians of America and the Aboriginals of Australia whose land the white stole or took by force.

#### **Article 18.**

- Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in

community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

These issues are peculiar to each religion, culture and society. It cannot be universalized.

#### **Article 19.**

- Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

This is a liberty right and contradicts Article-7 “against any incitement to such discrimination”.

#### **Article 20.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

No argument.

#### **Article 21.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

What is the interpretation of “which shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal suffrage”. This phrase refers to election in the multi-party democratic system of governance and connotes that the Chinese single party system as violating international human rights.

The multi-party democratic system of governance has now proven to be a disaster. Countries have lived beyond their means (see “living beyond means newage” in the Google). Every European country and USA are heavily in debt (external & public – exceeding the countries’ respective GDP); and only China and Taiwan have zero debts. Greece is now bankrupt; Spain, Ireland and others will follow. UK is in official recession, so too France. Only Germany is propping up the Eurozone. Politicians and economists have no answer to the problem; some advocate austerity measures whilst yet others advocate the opposite, borrow and spend more.

Regarding the connotation that the Chinese single party system is totalitarian one cannot be more wrong to say “crows are white”.

In China functionally, it is a highly bureaucratic, multi-level, single-party republic. Starting at the very lowest levels, the Chinese elect a representative to serve on a local council. These councils elect a representative to the city council, which elects a member to a regional council, etc. The current system requires everyone to be a member of the same political

party. The system can be called communist, however, it is a relatively unique system in which an established bureaucracy is interwoven into a republican structure.

The system has four layers of governing bodies:

1. Party Congress with 2,213 delegates
2. Central Committee with 204 members and 167 alternate members
3. Politburo with 25 members
4. Politburo Standing Congress with 9 members.

Members are elected to the Party Congress at the grass-root level through popular voting by the citizens of their respective constituencies. Party Congress elects members to the Central Committee who in turn elects members to the Politburo and who finally elects members to the Politburo Standing Committee.

This system is much maligned by the west. I quote below an extract from a CRS Report to the US Congress prepared by Susan V Lawrence and Michael F. Martin. This report is designed to provide US Congress with a perspective of the contemporary political system of China.

“Today, although the Party (Chinese Communist Party) is committed to maintaining a permanent monopoly on power and is intolerant of those who question its right to rule, analysts consider the political system to be neither monolithic nor rigidly hierarchal. Jockeying among leaders and institutions representing different sets of interests is common at every level of the system. Sometimes fierce competition exists among the members of the Communist Party’s nine-man Politburo Standing Committee and 25-member Politburo, China’s highest decision-making bodies. It also exists among ministries; between ministries and provincial governments, which are equals in bureaucratic rank; among provinces; and among the services of the military. The military and the Foreign Ministry are often on different pages. Even delegates to the National Peoples’ Congress, China’s weak legislature, sometimes attempt to push back against the government, to courts, and the public prosecution office. As part of a trend of very modest political pluralization, moreover, other political actors are increasingly able to influence policy debates. Such actors, who may join forces to advance particular causes, include an increasingly diverse media, state-owned and private corporations, official and quasi-official research institutes, diversity academics, officially sponsored associations and societies, and grassroots non-governmental organizations”

Those who may be interested can read the complete version on website [www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf](http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf)

## **Article 22.**

- Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

No argument

### **Article 23.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

These are a claim rights. Who and which party is responsible and obligated to ensure these rights to the right-holder; the society the right-holder lives in, or the country or the world.

### **Article 24.**

- Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

These are a claim rights. Who and which party is responsible and obligated to ensure these rights to the right-holder; the society the right-holder lives in, or the country or the world.

### **Article 25.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

These are claim rights peculiar to each country in harmony with its traditional cultures and economy. These cannot be universalized.

### **Article 26.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and
- equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

These issues are peculiar to each religion, culture and society and cannot be universalized.



#### **Article 27.**

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Point 2 refers to intellectual rights. This is treading on a very grey and potentially dangerous ground.

#### **Article 28.**

- Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

What is international order? Who should police the international order? Is it the United Nations? UN is the world's biggest whore house; the Secretary General being the Madam of the house, the governments who send their representatives the pimp, the west being the client who foots the bill and the representatives the whores. These representatives are trained to put up a smiling face just as the whores in the whorehouse.

#### **Article 29.**

- (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
- (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
- (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

“Democratic society” is misplaced in this article.

“Purposes and principles of the United Nations” has no universal mandate.

#### **Article 30.**

- Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

There is no doubt that the drafters of UDHR:

- Dr. Charles Malik, a Christian from Lebanon
- Alexander Bogomolov, a Communist from Russia
- Dr. Peng-Chun China, a philosopher from China (he insisted on the removal of all allusions to God from the UDHR)
- Rene Cassin, a Jew from France
- Eleanor Roosevelt, a Christian from USA (played an instrumental role)
- Charles Dukes, a Catholic from Northern Ireland.

- William Hodgson, a Christian from Australia
- Hernan Santa Cruz, a Christian from Chile
- John P. Humphrey, a Christian from Canada (carried the main responsibility for gathering and analyzing the background documents.

all had good intentions.

Human nature is much more complex than the articles proclaimed under UDHR, or the international treaties and conventions. It is forever dynamic and evolving(internal and external changes) in time and space. It is not by legalization and enforcement of proclamations, treaties, conventions, etc.bywhich peace and harmony can be brought to humanity. It is by sharing and caring, by cultivating compassion for all human beings, and by understanding human nature that peace and harmony can be brought to humanity.

I conclude by urging all readers to visit website [www.wikihow.com/Live-in-Peace](http://www.wikihow.com/Live-in-Peace)

## THE FALSE WORLD

According to the Recent African Ancestry theory, modern human beings evolved in Africa and migrated out of the continent some 50,000 to 100,000 years ago. They walked out from Africa in three different races: Caucasoids (Caucasians), Mongoloids and Negroids. These roamed across the earth, often facing natural calamities sometimes so severe that whole groups became extinct, and by 8000BC had spread all over the world.

In the early days they were afraid of nature: afraid of lightning, thunder, the ice-cold winds, storms and volcanic eruptions. Some dared these events of nature and some others had explanations; thus evolved the tribe leader and the medicine men. These two, in collaboration, became the leaders of the groups or tribes. This alliance between the tribal leader and the tribal medicine man was to evolve into collaboration of kings and monarchs with the church. Sometimes there is a conflicting stance between the two and other times it is a co-operative stance. This continues till today.

From early times humans, like animals, learnt the art of tactical deception to survive against odds; which were aplenty. But this art has evolved beyond tactics; it has become a genetic resource which is passed on from father to son. Lying, as a tactic of deception, has been cultivated to an extreme art.

Tactical deception of others has gradually ingrown to self-deception. This self-deception culminated with Abraham's invention of GOD around 2000BC. Perhaps it was just a strategy to unite people around him by a promise which he did not have to deliver in this world. Later on Christianity and Islam followed in the footsteps of Abraham; claiming same descent but distinct from the Jews. Meantime other peoples and races had, by this time, invented their own Gods and Goddesses; the Greeks and Romans had them: Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, Ares, Artemis, Athena, Demeter (Greek) and Jupiter, Venus, Apollo, Mars, Diana, Minerva, Ceres (Roman). Later on Christianity subdued the Greeks and Roman gods and goddesses, assigning them to mythology status in history. Caucasians had similar gods and goddesses and took with these gods and goddesses when they invaded Egypt and Indus valley. The same happened in Egypt where it was Islam that dominated. These gods and goddesses are still prevalent in India, in the name of Hinduism.

According to Abraham man was made in the likeness of God to rule "over the fish in the sea and the birds in the air, over the livestock, over the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground". What an irony when man chooses to cover himself (the likeness of God) with clothes of varying colours and designs, and paint their faces with various hues! By a stroke of genius Abraham had made the ruler of all the creatures in the world; to slaughter and kill and eat, or waste, at his pleasure. As the ruler of all things living on mother earth man has destroyed everything mother earth and nature could provide. As the earth is devastated and becomes barren man starts talking about climate change and accompanying global disaster. As the plants and animals are killed, slaughtered to extinction man tries to find ways to save them from total extinction. Thousands, nay millions, of species, both plants and animals, have gone extinct in satisfying man's thirst for power and lust. Abraham had also devised a way for man to atone in this world for all the crimes he committed.

Like deception, lying has been cultivated to the finest of arts. Sam Harris, the well-known neuroscientist, writes: "Among the many paradoxes of human life, this (lying) is perhaps the most peculiar and consequential. We often behave in ways that are guaranteed to make us unhappy. Many of us spend our lives marching with open eyes towards remorse, regret, guilt, and disappointment. And nowhere do our injuries seem more casually self-inflicted, or

the suffering we create more disproportionate to the needs of the moment, than in the LIES we tell to other human beings. Lying is the royal road to chaos”.

We tell small (white) lies and big lies.

We tell white lies for convenience, to avoid an embarrassing situation, to praise and to keep secrets and to deceive the listener. Everyday couples lie to each other, students lie in colleges, workers lie to their colleagues, friends lie to friends. Lying is a part of our everyday life like breathing is natural.

Most of us are painfully aware that our trust in governments, corporations, news and electronic news media and other public institutions has been eroded and undermined by lies. Lying has precipitated, or prolonged, wars: (1) The Gulf of Tonkin incident in Vietnam and (2) fake reports of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, were both instances in which lying led to wars.

Politicians are lying all the time. This is all the more grave because the audience, now available through electronic media and televisions, give them a greater audience. Government spokesmen lie or deceive most of the time. We shall do well to bear in mind that today's television consumers are masses of mental prisoners who get their values and views of the world from the images and programs that powerful corporations or governments keep feeding into their minds. Most viewers are in no position, nor have the disposition, to check the facts.

So deception and lying is the order of the day and we live in this deception and lying every moment of our lives.

## GREECE – DEATH KNEEL OF CAUCASOID HEGEMONY

Greece is the economists' hot debate for all the wrong reasons. The country is in deep financial crisis over burdened by public and external debts. Cost of further borrowing is increasingly expensive; the kind the country can hardly afford. Different economists, financial institutions, politicians and statesmen have different reasons for the crisis and differing solutions, often geometrically opposite, to the problem.

Let us take a look at the vital statistics of Greece:

Size (Area)	131,957 Sq. Km
Population	10,767,827
0 – 14 years	14.2 %
15 – 64 years	66.2 %
65 +	19.6%
Labor Force	4,959 million
Immigrant	20%
Unemployment	17.3% (2011)
15 – 24 years	25.8 % (2011)
GDP	US\$ 312 billion
Agriculture	3.3%
Industry	17.9 %
Services	78.9%
(Tourism)	15%
GDP per capita	US\$ 27,600
Exports	US\$ 26.64 billion
FE reserves in Gold	US\$ 6.37 billion
Public Debt	165.4% of GDP
External Debt	US\$ 583.3 billion
Population Below Poverty Line	20%

The patient is now on the table for readers to diagnose the illness.

Verdict:           Patient has bitten much more than it can swallow.

Now let us analyze the options propounded by the economists, financial institutions, politicians and others to cure the patient:

Option A: Cut back on spending and introduce austerity measures.

Option B: Borrow more and expand economy

### CUT BACK ON SPENDING AND INTRODUCE AUSTERITY MEASURES

1. Greece's per capita GDP of US\$ 27,600 compares fairly well in relation to the average per capita of US\$ 34,500. It compares very high as compared to those in China and India, which are US\$ 8,570 & 3,700 only. So, individually the Greeks are so, so compared to its Euro-zone partners but very rich when compared to China and India.
2. The reason the Greeks are richer than the average Chinese and Indians is because they have set high wages to their labor rates. These rates are artificially set by the perception of the health of a country. If a man in China, the country which is today propping up the world financially from total collapse, can live on US\$ 8,570 per annum, why can't the Greeks do so?

3. By reducing the cost of living to Chinese standards the Greeks can save US\$ 150 billion. The government could then issue bonds to buy this amount and use it to pay off part of the external debt of US\$ 583.3 billion. This will ease the cast of borrowings.
4. Greece does not have any industry or agriculture worth its name; it is dependent on the service sector, that too heavily (15% of GDP) on tourism, a sector beyond its control. Greece is a welfare state, a luxury it can ill afford. It ranks top in number of physicians per capita at 4.4 as against China 1.51 and India 0.6. It ranks also in the top bracket in cars per capita at 455as against 118 & 12 in China and India. This luxury must all go if the Greeks are to be proud descendents of a once proud country embedded in history; they must get out of the beggar mode.
5. They have to swallow their pride to do manual and menial jobs they have left to be done by immigrants which comprise 20% of the labor force.
6. But all these austerities will also shrink the economy and eventually lead to more external debts even Greeks now start to work and live like the Chinese and Indians.
7. Shrinking of economy will entail more job losses and even more hardship.
8. Eventually there will be public outrage and complete break-down of law and order.

#### BORROW MORE AND EXPAND ECONOMY

1. With an economy relying on the service sector where are the scopes to expand?
2. Tourism, which makes 15% of the GDP, is not in their hands. The more Greeks debate and fight amongst themselves, the farther a congenial environment will prevail in Greece to attract tourists into their country.
3. Greece was never known as an industrial or technological might. The complacent Greeks are hardly in a position to match the might, in this respect, of her Euro-zone partners. Markets in the (so labeled) third world have vanished. In effect countries like, Korea, China, Indonesia, India, Brazil, Argentina, etc. have overtaken the Greek industry and technology.
4. Further borrowing to expand is a non-starter.

Another option, which the economists and financial institutions are not, but Greek politicians are proposing. That is, to request (beg) the external creditors to freeze the interest payable on the US\$ 583.3 billion and to give Greece a breathing space to get its house in order. This will have a domino effect on the finances of the banks and financial institutions who are the creditors. Other Euro-zone governments can step in but most of them are already in recession; one exception being Germany who ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in GDP. But bear in mind Germany is only 26<sup>th</sup> in GDP per capita at US\$ 38,400. Its practicality is doubtful at the best.

SO THE PATIENT IS DEADNO MATTER WHICH PROCEDURE IS OPTED. SHE HAD LIVED BEYOND HER MEANS FOR TOO LONG.

The question naturally that follows is: how did Greece come to the state of affairs? Surely statistics would have warned the policy makers in Greece of this danger.

To understand the causes, which are many, we have to look at the history of the Caucasoid race. History records the hegemonic culture and ideology of the Caucasoid race (and its sub-races).

From 1500BC the Caucasoids descended from central Europe and swept across the Northern Africa, the Middle-East and into Northern India, exterminating the Negroids who had preceded them in these areas.

Before Columbus discovered(?) America in 1492 and white settlers started migrating from Europe to America in 1600, the population of the peoples then inhabiting America is estimated to be from 50 to 100 million. Today this number has been reduced to 2.5 million in USA, 1.5 million in Canada, 10 million in Mexico and around 43 million in South America; a total of 48 millions. What happened to the native population then? The Pope had then decreed that the natives were animals without souls and could be hunted and killed like animals; and the whites did exactly that.

From 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards hordes of Caucasoid plunderers, armed with Christian beliefs, fanned out from Europe (England, The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Germany) to colonize Negroid and Mongoloid held territories in Africa, Asia and South America. Surely the race that can conquer the world must be a superior race as surely must also be their beliefs, customs and ideas!

On 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945, when the Japanese troops were in full retreat and the fall of Japan was imminent, America dropped the first ever atom bomb in Hiroshima killing thousands of Japanese civilians and maiming many more others for life; the effects still carried over to their children. Remember, this atom bomb had never been tested and the extent of the damages it would cause still unknown. This bomb could have wiped Japan off the map! The American rationale was that it would hasten the Japanese surrender, thereby saving American soldiers.. Three days later, on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1945 America dropped the second atom bomb on the Japanese city of Nagasaki, to force Japan to surrender immediately to America rather than surrender to Russia whose troops were closing in on Japan from the north.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards till 1945 (still later in Africa) the European countries exploited the material resources of countries across the world and built their industry; importing raw materials from their respective colonies and selling those back to the countries of origin at tenfold value addition. Having amassed huge fortunes, industries and technology these European countries led the world market. If a bridge had to be built in the Asian and South American countries, European technology and finance had to be relied upon; so too for setting up industries, other infrastructures. Only Japan competed with them. Little did they realize that millions (nay billions) of people in Asia and South America, their former colonies, were catching up. The European nations built themselves into welfare states for the pleasure and happiness of their respective citizens. They became complacent. All this time millions of Asians and South Americans were toiling and becoming technologically self-reliant.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century saw a radical shift. Japan, which was already an industrial and financial power house, was joined by South Korea, China, Taiwan and India in Asia and by Brazil, Argentina and Mexico in the Americas.

The over four thousand years of hegemonic culture of the Caucasoids cannot be re-sculptured in a few decades. That the Mongoloids and Negroids are equally capable people the white Caucasoid cannot accept. That decade has gone by since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Greece is down and out now. With the fall of Greece the domino effect will bring down Europe and finally America. The Caucasoid is now down on his knees; it's only a matter of decades before they finally fall and, with it, the Caucasoid hegemony.

## Multi-party Democracy vs Authoritarian Governance

Compare today the economies of the democratic multi-party Western World with that of the (so labeled) authoritarian single party China! Consider these :

- (1) Public debts (% of GDP) of USA, EU & China are 102, 82 & 18 respectively
- (2) External debts (in trillion US\$) of USA, EU & China are 15 (mostly to China!), 13 & 0.5 respectively
- (3) External debts to GDP (%) of USA, EU & China are 99, 85 & 5 respectively.

### **CIVILIZATION AND FOSSIL FUELS**

Prior to the industrial revolution people all over the world lived not much above subsistence level. More than eighty percent of the population was engaged in farming and other means of survival.

The first industrial revolution started in England in the late eighteen century; followed by Germany and France. The real industrialization, called The Second Industrialization started in mid nineteenth century with the invention of the steam engine and the internal combustion engine. Spurred by their new found knowledge to convert raw materials into useful products, and that too in great volumes, England and Europe set out across their borders seeking raw material resources; eventually to colonize the whole world. Consumption of oil and gas accelerated with the discovery of very large quantities of oil and gas reserves in the Middle East. Industrialization gathered pace till the second world war. During the war period huge quantities of oil was required to run the machines of war.

After end of the war, with many countries ravaged, cities factories destroyed, industrialization grew in quantum leaps. Power plants, factories and industries were set up at a mind-boggling pace. Quality of life improved throughout Europe and America. Japan and South Korea joined in the race in early twentieth century to be followed later by China, India, Brazil, Argentina, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc. The standard of living, as defined by possession of wealth, improved. The rest of the world followed and standard of living improved across the board. Economies blossomed as the growth engines were fuelled by ever abundant discoveries of oil and gas resources.

Today, as we look back to the days of our forefathers, we are inclined to believe that we are living in a better world. But are we leaving a better world for our future posterity?

Objective experts and analysts now tell us that the oil and gas reserves will, at present day's rate of consumption, last for only forty and sixty five years respectively. The rate of consumption has not peaked yet. Energy hungry China and India, with growth rate at over nine and eight percent respectively, are gobbling up more and more oil and gas. So are other emerging economies. The end of the oil and gas may come sooner. Coal is predicted to last another one hundred and fifty years. But with the deficit in oil and gas the consumption rate of coal will increase; at best it may last for another hundred years.

People who believe in faith will look for divine intervention. I have no argument here.

Barring a divine intervention to future of our children seems very bleak.

Europe and US will be insulated to a certain extent because they have invested very heavily in nuclear energy research. Today most of the European countries are producing above twenty percent of their total electricity requirement from nuclear plants. They will have little difficulty in switching totally to nuclear energy when the time comes. So too is true with US.



Apart from South Korea and Japan only a few Asian and African countries produce electricity from nuclear plants; and that too below five percent of the total production.

I am afraid we will revert back to the pre decolonization era if we do not do something for ourselves.

## BANGLADESH SCENARIO

The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) was incorporated as a statutory body under an Act in 1964. I remember one of our classmates, Yusuf Chowdhury, joined this organization immediately after graduation. Yusuf subsequently left the organization to join the civil service.

PAEC is charged with the promotion of, and research work on the peaceful uses of atomic energy in the fields of agriculture, medicine and industry, as well as the execution of development projects involving nuclear power stations and the generation of electric power, and to perform such other functions relating to the peaceful uses of atomic energy as may be agreed between the commission and the government.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) was established in 1973 through the promulgation of the Presidential Order. Since then BAEC has been keeping itself engaged in the planning and development of acquiring nuclear technology for possible peaceful applications in the fields of food, agriculture, health, industry and environment ensuring nuclear safety and radiation protection. Its other mission is “implementation of nuclear power program”.

Whilst PAEC states in no uncertain terms regarding its mission to develop nuclear power stations and generation of electric power, BAEC is non-specific in this activity.

Whilst Pakistan has won laurels in developing nuclear technology Bangladesh has nothing to show. Pakistan and India can boast of stalwarts like Dr. Kader Khan and Dr. AbulKalam Azad.

It is imperative, and high time, that Bangladesh government puts special emphasis in developing nuclear technology for power generation. Our universities produce some of the best young graduates in engineering, physics and applied sciences. These talents need to be harnessed in the interest of the country; in fact to save the country from total darkness.

We can follow the systems and examples set by Pakistan and India to develop our young talent in nuclear technology; in particular for electricity generation. Setting up a nuclear power plant with assistance of any other country would be of little value if we do not develop nuclear technology ourselves.

## AMINA

Amina is a dark complexioned girl born to poor family who lives off the little piece of land that the land. Father, when he is not working on the land, works as a labourer.

Scene 1: Amina suckling from her mother.

Scene 2: Amina toddling with sparkling innocent eyes.

Scene 3: Amina, now two years old, is in market with father. She sees grown men and children taking sweets from vendors, so reaches out with her tiny hands to grab a handful but is immediately stopped by father. She tries again at the next stall and the vendor hits her hand with a stick. Amina is perplexed as the why other people and children are taking but she is not allowed.

Scene 4: Amina is now five. Shee sees children of her age playing in the neighboring house belonging to a rich neighbour. She is immediately scolded and chased out. She then sees some children ill dressed as herself playing in the field. This time she is not chased away.

Scene 5: Amina is now six. The rich neighbour with two people come to the house, pulls her father out of the house. They first scold her father, shouting that his cow had broken their fence and eaten much of their family vegetable garden. They then beat up her father and leave. Amina is scared.

Scene 6: Amina is now seven. She is in the village market with her father. She accidentally bumps into a man drops the pitcher of curd he is carrying. The man, sternly looking, slaps her on her cheek. When her father protests, he beats up her father, and is finally obliged to ask for forgiveness. Amina wonders why her father does not fight back. Back home her mother explains to her that those people were rich and powerful.

another time the wife of the rich neighbour comes and scolds and beats her mother saying that her chicken had broken a pitcher in their house. Amina now thinks they were inferior to the rich people.

Scene 7: Amina is now eight. She observes, through the gaps in the fence, little girls like herself all dressed alike, chattering and laughing all the while ontheroad. The mother tells Amina that these were children of wealthy families and they are going to school. Amina now knows there are different classes of people; rich and poor, and that the poor are inferior to the rich. The spirit inside her dies and accepts her inferior status in life.

Scene 8: Amina is now ten. She is working in the house because her mother had gone to work as a help at a rich neighbors' house. She is sweating and wiping her brows. She is struggling with the fire and the smoke.

Scene 9: Amina is now sixteen and is getting married to a man of twenty four from the next village. He is strong looking. Amina automatically assumes the inferior status.

- Scene 10: Amina and her husband are in their new house, built from mud and roofed with hay. They even have a small compound in front and at the back. They are happy. Husband works as a farm hand to a rich landlord of the next village. Amina struggles with the household chores.
- Scene 11: Amina is eighteen. The first child is born. It is a girl and the husband is not happy. In the next three years they have two more children, both boys. The family is poor and they do not have enough to eat and clothe.
- Scene 12: Amina is twenty four. The husband leaves for the city. Amina takes a look around in absolute perplexity. The husband had left with her little money promising he would send them money as soon as he starts earning in the city. Intuition tells Amina that she must be extremely frugal. She spends as little money as she could, but still the little money keeps on disappearing. She then sells the little possession she could master from the house to feed herself and the three children. They are always hungry and asking for food. Many a night she goes absolutely without food. Months pass by and still there is no news from the husband. Amina prays and weeps in silence. The situation becomes critical and Amina goes out to work as a help at a rich men's house. The lady of the house is cruel and arrogant and often abuses Amina and sometimes beats her. Amina has no option but to pray and weep silently. Then the son of the house rapes her. What can she do. She can starve and die, but what about the children? She washes her shame with her tears. She prays and weeps silently. Then a sympathetic relative comes to visit her. Amina is ashamed of her appearance and covers her body for modesty. The relatives are takes pity and gives her some chicks to raise. In one year the chicks mature. Amina sells the male ones and keeps the hen for eggs. But there is still ot enough food, leave aside modest clothing.
- Scene 13: Amina is twenty eight. Some women at the house she works are speaking about a bank, they are not sure of its name that is giving loans to very poor women without any possession to show. Amina gradually learns that the bank is Grameen bank. She goes to the bank and tells of her desperate poverty and the bank loans her taka three thousand at the interest rate of thirty two percent. Amina, not knowing, or caring about the interest rate, takes the money. She buys one fifty chickens for taka two thousand and keeps taka one thousand for expenses.
- Scene 14: Amina is thirty. Now she is not going hungry. She is able to buy clothe for herself and the children. She is even able to send her two boys to the local school which is free. Amina thanks god, and Grameen bank. For the first time in her life she feels secure. She can even afford to put a shy smile to her face. She is even paying the installments on her loan.
- Scene 15: Amina is thirty four. Tragedy, nay catastrophe, strikes. There is bird's flu spreading in her area. Amina monitors her chickens with anxiety everyday. Then one morning she sees greenish white fetas, the flu has come to her home. The next morning some chicks are dead. Every time she sees the greenish white fetas her heart stops a beat. She looks up the heavens and

prays; then weeps; weeps silently, for she is afraid of the world. By the time the flu passes by ninety percent of her chickens are dead.

With the few chickens left she cannot buy enough food to feed herself and her children. She finds employment at a neighbour's house at a meager pay. Her daughter is now sixteen but she cannot find a suitable husband for her, the daughter is dark complexioned like Amina. The boys are not yet old enough to work for money; there are some small industries not far from the village but there is an ngo in the area which campaigns that employing people under eighteen is against human rights and law. Their campaign is very powerful. Amina moans against this ngo and against human rights and curses them silently. Everything amina does, she does it silently; for she is afraid of the world where she is an inferior person. Amina is failing in payment of the installment against the loan from Grameen bank. The collector of the bank, a stern woman, visits her and berates her not paying her installments. With thirty two percent interest the loan keeps on growing and growing. Amina is obliged to send her daughter to work as a help at a richman's house' but she worries, having experienced the ill treatment and the rapes. What else can she do? As long as there is life in the body she and the children must eat. The collector's visit becomes more often; each occasion she berates her in ways even the kabuliwallah would frown. Butamina cannot pay. She can hardly feed her children and herself; often going hungry. She prays and weeps, weeps in silence because she is afraid of the world.

Scene 16: Amina is thirty six when tragedy strikes a second time. Her unmarried daughter is now with child, fathered by the owner of the house she worked. Amina moans, she shrieks, she weeps loudly now because she is no longer afraid of the world. She has nothing to loose now. Come nightfall Amina lays down in her scant bed never to rise again. The morning saw the body of a skinny and wrinkled body of Amina, that Amina who is only thirty six years old. There was a sneer in her face as if to say to the world "i am not afraid of you; now you cannot torment me anymore".

### Epitaph:

Amina never knew that a great man of Bengal named sheikh Mujibur Rahamn called this country "sonar Bangla", had she known she would have asked; "where is my sonar"? She had never heard those patriotic songs singing the praise of Bangla and Bangladesh; otherwise she would have asked, "am i not a Bengali and am i not a part of those songs? Why can't i sing those songs?" She never knew that a great poet and literature named Rabindranath Tagore had written "this life is blest! For your sake such miles have i travelled" or else Amina would have responded " such miles have i traversed with misery, where is my blest"? She never heard the politicians eulogizing the country called Bangladesh, or else she would have asked "were you eulogizing me"?

## DEMOCRACY + CAPITALISM + CONSUMERISM + INDIVIDUALISM = RECIPE FOR DISASTER

The general perception is that democratic system is the best system of governance available to the world.

Now let us examine whether this perception is an illusion or a reality.

The origin of democracy, a combination of two elements of Greek words – “Demos” (people)+”Kratos”(power) - meaning people’s power - traces back to classical Athens in 600BC. In those times two political parties or social classes that vied for power in classical Athens, were the oligarchs and the democrats. The oligarchs tried to establish a state in which only owners of substantial amounts of property could vote and hold public office whilst the democrats insisted that all male citizens have the same rights. In this context it would be worthwhile to revisit Plato’s “Republic”. The rule by society’s best minds was the core concept of Plato’s so-called “philosopher kings”. In Republic he wrote “as a just and healthy person is governed by knowledge and reason, a just society must be under the control of society’s most cultivated and best informed minds”. Plato’s “Ship Analogy” and “Allegory of the Cave” elaborates his dis-satisfaction with democracy and elaborates on its intrinsic defects.

In the modern times democracy was given a new meaning by the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg speech of 1863 when he introduced the catch phrase: “by the people, for the people and of the people”. These few words ignited the imagination of the world. It would not be far from wrong to say that democracy really took roots in the minds of the people all over the world from these few words. What could be more beholden than the promise of every person a share in the power game! But you must admit that Abraham Lincoln was a person of little learning. Yet it was not till the end of the First World War in 1918 that democracy was beginning to take hold of European countries. Till 1918 there were only three Republics in Europe: France, Switzerland and Portugal. One must note that though the First World War was started on territorial dispute between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its neighbors it took a turn to ideological war when USA intervened. Austro-Hungarian Empire represented the monarchy as opposed to democracy advocated by USA. So, unlike previous conflicts in Europe where the conflicts ended with peace agreements this war was fought to the last. Democracy, represented by USA, was the victor against monarchy, represented by Austro-Hungarian Empire. This empire was disemboweled into three countries leaving only the core German speaking area to form today’s Austria. One by one the other monarchies, under the pressure from USA, crumbled and democratic system took over.

Now is this catch phrase “for the people, by the people and of the people” a reality to empower to the people in the decision making of the country’s affairs or is it just an empty slogan to fool the many? Take a look at democracy in play today in USA. One has to be a multi-millionaire to promote his candidature for a Senate in the US. The estimated price tag for the US elections in next November is estimated at almost US\$ 6 billion. So much for people’s power! The real system is “for the 10 percent, by the 10 percent and of the 10 percent”.

When one is asked why he wants democracy, the most likely answer is they he wants liberty. What he is not aware is that democracy does not guarantee individual freedom. In fact democracy is the antithetical to liberty.

In the US Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) – which lists all laws enacted by the federal government – comprises of 200 volumes, of which the index alone takes up more than 700 pages. It contains rules for everything under the sun – from how a watchband should look to how the onion rings should be prepared in restaurants. There are half a million people behind bars in the US just for “drug crimes”. No one is safe from law enforcers, anyone can be locked up on any pretext. No “right” is sacrosanct, neither the right of free speech nor the right to property.

Recall the recent diplomatic row between India and Sweden where an Indian couple had their child taken away from by law enforcers because they were feeding the child sitting on the floor!

The US has the maximum number of people behind bars:

USA: 2,019,250 out of a population of 340 million  
 China: 1,549,000 out of a population of 1300 million  
 Russia: 846,970 out of a population of 130 million  
 India: 313,967 out of a population of 1200 million.

Ranking of USA by country

Subject	Rank
Homicide	78
Divorce	3
Domestic Violence	5
Single Mothers	1

I will take the example of India, often hailed as the biggest democratic country in the world. This country stinks of corruption in the ruling and corporate circle. Not a single political party or person is untouched by corruption. The most senior ministers along with their crony corporate collaborators are all under the scanner. There was the G-2 scam, followed by the Coalgate Scandal, then the Navasa Housing Scandal, etc. involving hundreds of billions of dollars illegally acquired by ministers, politicians and their crony corporate partners. Sonia Gandhi may have escaped her Bofors mis-adventure but she cannot clean her hands from her son-in-law Robert Bhadra. The chief of the BJP, Mr. Gadkari, is under the scanner. Democratic politics and business nexus have had heyday for over three decades; all plundering the wealth of India. Whilst India boasts a healthy growth of around 8% and Mukesh Ambani is worth US\$ 20 billion plus, 32.7% percent of its population (327 million) earn under US\$ 1.3/day and 36% (360 million) earn US\$ 2.00/day! That is not enough for the rich. Land on which the marginalized part of the population scraped a living are being handed over to the rich for investments in industry, housing, etc.. That is not the end; the little parcels of land owned by these marginalized people through their forefathers are requisitioned for industries rendering these marginalized people as destitutes. Is this what democracy promised?

Democracy denotes free market and by extension capitalism. Capitalism by definition is “an economic system that is based on private ownership and the means of creation of goods or services for profit”. Central to capitalism include competitive markets, wage labor and capital accumulation. It looks innocent, but is it in reality? Consider this:

Earning per Day	Population
US\$	in Billion
1. 1.00	0.88
2. 1.45	1.72
3. 2.00	3.14

Of the 7 billion people inhabiting the world today we have over 50% of the population below the poverty line. Compare this to the 24.2 millionaires and billionaires in the world with Carlos Slim of Mexico topping the list at US\$ 69 billion, followed by Bill Gates at US\$ 61 billion. In every country the gap between the rich and the poor is getting bigger. Whilst a rich household lives in an apartment of 2500 square feet and more and has central air-conditioning the poor guy down the lane living in a slum cannot afford to light one bulb. Almost one billion people live in slums. What good is democracy+capitalism to these and other marginalized people who comprise over half the world's total population?

Then again democracy coupled with capitalism tempts the general population to expect the best of living conditions; in other words everybody wants the cake for himself. To appease this popular demand the government has to make the cake bigger which it does by borrowing: from internal public and by external borrowings. This means every democratic capitalist country has to borrow and live beyond its means. The classic examples are Greece, Spain, Italy and some other Euro-zone countries. These countries have no means to pay back on their debt. Politicians and economists are coming up with various solutions and more often than not they contradict each other. There is no way out for these and other euro-zone countries to recover or even maintain their status. The yesteryear developing countries like China, Korea, Taiwan, India, Brazil and Argentina who were the markets have now become suppliers. The US has an even worse record in that its borrowings (public debt plus external debt) are more than double its GDP. Here we are talking of US\$ 30 trillion of debt against a GDP of US\$ 15 trillion. Recall the budget crisis of 2011 when the American government went broke and there was real danger of the government machinery shutting down; depriving the one million federal employees of their pay.

With capitalism comes consumerism. Remember capitalism, to be sustained, requires the GDP of each country to grow by minimum two percent. If this is not achieved then the economy stagnates and recession is not far away. Once recession sets in the financial system tends to collapse. So countries must keep on producing ever more and find markets for their produce. Therefore the public are encouraged to spend which is made easier by our cashless financial system. Individuals spend more than they can otherwise afford. The present civilization is today based on fossil fuels: coal, gas and oil. Some of the best scientists have predicted that oil reserves in the world will be exhausted within forty years, gas within sixty years and coal possibly within hundred years. Emerging economies like China, India and Brazil are now in the fray to secure supplies of these vital commodities. This unbridled competition for scarce energy resources will invariably lead to animosity and conflict between countries; manifested in propaganda and intrigue against each other. Danger of wars over energy hangs today like the sword of Damocles.

Compounding the already precarious situation is the slow, but certain, conversion of the world to individualism. During the days of our forefathers people were born and brought up in communities where adherence to traditional social cultures was binding. People realized and lived in mutual obligation. Today this fabric of human bondage has been torn asunder by individual egoism and selfishness. Money and power is what people lust for; and at any cost. Lying and deception is the order of the day. Honesty is no longer an attribute of a good person. In the US, less than a century of full-blown democracy coupled with unbridled capitalism and individualism has resulted in the steadily increasing moral degeneration, and cultural decay in the form of continually rising rates of divorce, illegitimacy, abortion and crime.

But why does democracy attract so many people? I believe it is because that freedom promoted by democracy links to the religious belief that man is made after the image of God

and hence, man by nature, is essentially good. Neuroscientists and neuro-anthropologists will tell you that a human being is born with its brain smaller, as compared to other animals, in comparison to the adult brain. But this small brain embodies in it anger, greed and cravings. It is only through tutoring at a small age these elements are contained. Or why else, after 600,000 years of walking this earth, we would still in conflict: nations between nations, regions against regions, races against races and religions against religions?

Our civilization of less than a thousand years has mutilated our mother earth untold number of times than what our ancestors did in 600,000 years. Yet our mother earth will survive when this civilization dies, like other civilizations have done before ours, to host another civilization.

I would refer you Hans-Hermann Hoppe's "Democracy – The God That Failed".



## APPROXIMATION TO DEMOCRACY

The word “Democracy” is the combination of two elements of Greek words; demos (people, public) and kratos (power). Democracy denotes peoples’ power.

In its idealistic form, every person of the state takes part in deciding the affairs of the state.

In the present complex world this is not achievable as the affairs of the state requires information and knowledge in international affairs, economics, financial practices, resources, criminal and civil laws, etc., etc., of not his own country only but also those of other countries which are beyond the competence of an ordinary citizen. An ordinary person has neither the time, nor disposition nor capability to acquire all those knowledge and information. One must bear in mind that countries are co-operating but at the same time competing for scarce resources and markets.

So today countries adopt forms and systems of governance that approximate democracy; ideal democracy is not feasible.

The major systems of government today are :

- Parliamentary system like in Australia, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc., etc.
- Presidential systemlike in Brazil, France, Russia, S. Korea, Indonesia, Iran, USA, etc., etc..
- Single Party systemlike in Cuba,& China.

### **Parliamentary System**

In this system the ministry is subject to the legislature.

Some countries have a single legislature (unicameral) whilst others have two legislatures (bicameral).

Prominent countries with single legislature (cameral)are : Bangladesh, Denmark, Hungary, Israel, Norway, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Turkey, etc.

Prominent countries with twin legislatures (bicameral)are : Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, United Kingdom, etc..

Essentially the parliamentary system has two or more parties competing for governance. The contending parties may nominate for every constituency or for as many constituencies they choose. The parties may form alliances and nominate a single candidate for any constituency to represent the alliance. The candidates are electedto the parliament by popular votes.

The majority party in the parliament then elects the prime minister who thereafter selects the ministry from out of the elected parliament members; some countries electing to allow a certain number or proportion from outside the parliament. The post of the president, who has virtually no powers, is elected by the parliament through voting.

## **Presidential System**

In this system the president is independent of the legislature.

In USA each state first elect an “electoral college” also known as “electors”. There are 538 electors in each presidential election. This electoral college then elects the president. Members to the house of representative and to the senate are elected by popular vote. There are 435 and 100 members in the house of representative and the senate respectively.

In France the president is elected by popular vote. France has two legislatures (1) National assembly - elected by popular vote and (2) Senate – elected partly by popular vote and partly by representatives.

Like the parliamentary system the presidential system has two or more parties.

## **Single Party System**

The single party system is a type of party system government formed by a single party or by parties that came to power in the wake of independence from their colonizers or civil wars. This type of system is fashioned by nationalist ideology.

Most readers are familiar with the parliamentary and the presidential systems. A brief on the Chinese Single Party system seems to be in order

In China functionally, it is a highly bureaucratic, multi-level, single-party republic. Starting at the very lowest levels, the Chinese elect a representative to serve on a local council. These councils elect a representative to the city council, which elects a member to a regional council, etc. The current system requires everyone to be a member of the same political party. The system can be called communist, however, it is a relatively unique system in which an established bureaucracy is interwoven into a republican structure.

The system has four layers of governing bodies:

5. Party Congress with 2,213 delegates
6. Central Committee with 204 members and 167 alternate members
7. Politburo with 25 members
8. Politburo Standing Congress with 9 members.

Delegates to the National People's Congress are elected for five-year terms via a multi-tiered representative [electoral system](#). Delegates are elected by the provincial people's assemblies, who in turn are elected by lower level assemblies, and so on through a series of tiers to the local people's assemblies which are directly elected by the [electorate](#). Party Congress elects members to the Central Committee who in turn elects members to the Politburo and who finally elects members to the Politburo Standing Committee.

This system is much maligned by the west. I quote below an extract from a CRS Report to the US Congress prepared by Susan V Lawrence and Michael F. Martin. This report is designed to provide US Congress with a perspective of the contemporary political system of China.

“Today, although the Party (Chinese Communist Party) is committed to maintaining a permanent monopoly on power and is intolerant of those who question its right to rule,

analysts consider the political system to be neither monolithic nor rigidly hierarchal. Jockeying among leaders and institutions representing different sets of interests is common at every level of the system. Sometimes fierce competition exists among the members of the Communist Party's nine-man Politburo Standing Committee and 25-member Politburo, China's highest decision-making bodies. It also exists among ministries; between ministries and provincial governments, which are equals in bureaucratic rank; among provinces; and among the services of the military. The military and the Foreign Ministry are often on different pages. Even delegates to the National Peoples' Congress, China's weak legislature, sometimes attempt to push back against the government, to courts, and the public prosecution office. As part of a trend of very modest political pluralization, moreover, other political actors are increasingly able to influence policy debates. Such actors, who may join forces to advance particular causes, include an increasingly diverse media, state-owned and private corporations, official and quasi-official research institutes, diversity academics, officially sponsored associations and societies, and grassroots non-governmental organizations"

Those who may be interested can read the complete version on website  
[www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf](http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf)

***It is an irony that the Democratic and Republican parties in USA and the Communist Party in China came into being/power upon the throes of civil war. Whilst a rivalry between Adams and Jackson led to spilt of the original single party to form the Democratic and Republican parties in USA, the Chinese did not experience any such rivalry amongst its founding fathers and so remained as one.***

**It would not be illogical then to conclude that all three systems are all approximation only to Democracy and that none of them are truly democratic.**

*Human rights and liberties have often been linked with the system of government. The single party system has been accused of being totalitarian (which is untrue) and of denying human rights and liberties (which is totally unfounded). Human rights and liberties are quite a another subject which I hope to take up later.*

## BAKSAL -PERSPECTIVE IN RETROSPECT

On 16<sup>th</sup> December 1971 a new country, Bangladesh, was born on throes of a peoples' revolution against the rule of West Pakistan. Sheikh MujiburRahman, as the "Father of the Nation", who had inspired this revolution was thrust with the responsibility realizing the dream of the Bengali people, a dream he had inspired. Over ninety five percent of Bengalis voted for his party, The Awami League, in the 1970 elections. He was the person responsible to make and take decisions.

The early years were very difficult, as any newly emerged country would be. The economy and the industry that fueled economy were in shatters. Unwittingly we chose to adopt the same administrative system that was left behind by Pakistan (who had earlier adopted the system from the British). Three years into his rule Sheikh MujiburRahman realized he had to make a drastic change if the dream, he and the people of the country had dreamt, was to be kept alive. He decided to adopt the Chinese One Party system of governance and so in June 1975, by the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution, he formed a single political party by amalgamating Awami League with KrishakSramik Party to form BAKSAL terming it as a "Second Revolution". One must remember that there were no other political parties of any consequence at that time except Jamaat which was banned.

Some vested quarters and intellectuals screamed foul calling it "constitutional coup de tat". Others labeled him a dictator, referring to it as any other third world country dictator. Note here the reference to "third world".

Vested quarters: in the late twentieth century Bangladesh is situated in a very important geopolitical region. India was pro-Moscow and communism was spreading westward from China to the borders of Bangladesh. Bangladesh lay between two countries the west deemed their foes. Remember Washington sent in the seventh fleet to the Bay of Bengal at the height of the war! Bangladesh was the country from which the west, particularly, USA, could confront their two foes.

Intellectuals: Many of these suffered from the mental colonization by the British. They are comfortable to sit back and listen to the BBC on the radio or watch the entertainment and news dished out in the television. To a great extent these are mental prisoners of British colonization who get their values and views of the world from the powerful vested western media. They lack the disposition to check facts; all the more so because of their inferiority complex towards the whites. Did they ever analyze the workings of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)? The west (the alpha wolf) howled FOUL and they (INFERIORS) echoed it.

True the formation of BAKSAL as the single party through the amalgamation of Awami League and the Krishak Sramik Party was a concern. Having seen the activities of the Awami League party members and activists during the early years of Bangladesh the apprehensions that these thugs would take over the whole country felt by the general public was genuine.

But was this that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had in mind when he formed the single party? That his party members and activists would rob the country dry? For a person, who had dedicated his whole life for the cause of the Bengali people, certainly not! He was inspired by the

progress that China was making under the CCP and dismayed with the attitude of the west towards Bangladesh.

Unfortunately Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally killed by the agents of the vested quarters along with almost his entire family in August 1975 and BAKSAL was abolished by the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution. We will never know what Bangladesh would be today if Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had never been treacherously killed.

Was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman right to look up to the Chinese ideology and political system?

A look at today's China should be a good indicator.

In China functionally, it is a highly bureaucratic, multi-level, single-party republic. Starting at the very lowest levels, the Chinese elect a representative to serve on a local council. These councils elect a representative to the city council, which elects a member to a regional council, etc. The current system requires everyone to be a member of the same political party. The system can be called communist, however, it is a relatively unique system in which an established bureaucracy is interwoven into a republican structure.

The system has four layers of governing bodies:

1. National People's Congress with 2,213 delegates
2. Central Committee with 204 members and 167 alternate members
3. Politburo with 25 members
4. Politburo Standing Congress with 9 members.

Delegates to the National People's Congress are elected for five-year terms via a multi-tiered representative [electoral system](#). Delegates are elected by the provincial people's assemblies, who in turn are elected by lower level assemblies, and so on through a series of tiers to the local people's assemblies which are directly elected by the [electorate](#). Party Congress elects members to the Central Committee who in turn elects members to the Politburo and who finally elects members to the Politburo Standing Committee.

This system is much maligned by the west. I quote below an extract from a CRS Report to the US Congress prepared by Susan V Lawrence and Michael F. Martin. This report is designed to provide US Congress with a perspective of the contemporary political system of China.

"Today, although the Party (Chinese Communist Party) is committed to maintaining a permanent monopoly on power and is intolerant of those who question its right to rule, analysts consider the political system to be neither monolithic nor rigidly hierarchal. Jockeying among leaders and institutions representing different sets of interests is common at every level of the system. Sometimes fierce competition exists among the members of the Communist Party's nine-man Politburo Standing Committee and 25-member Politburo, China's highest decision-making bodies. It also exists among ministries; between ministries and provincial governments, which are equals in bureaucratic rank; among provinces; and among the services of the military. The military and the Foreign Ministry are often on different pages. Even delegates to the National Peoples' Congress, China's weak legislature, sometimes attempt to push back against the government, to courts, and the public prosecution office. As part of a trend of very modest political pluralization, moreover, other political actors are increasingly able to influence policy debates. Such actors, who may join forces to advance particular causes, include an increasingly diverse media, state-owned and private corporations, official and quasi-official research institutes, diversity academics,

officially sponsored associations and societies, and grassroots non-governmental organizations”

Those who may be interested can read the complete version on website  
[www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf](http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R41007.pdf)

Financial health of a country precedes the well being of its citizens. Now let us see the financial health of the western countries vis-à-vis China.

The table below shows the financial statistics of the western countries (multi-party democracies).

COUNTRY	GDP in Billion \$	FOREX in Billion \$	EXTERNAL DEBT in Billion \$	PUBLIC DEBT in Billion \$
EU Countries	16,242	925	13,720	12,993
USA	14,526	146	15,571	13,706
Germany	3,286	263	4,713	2,758
France	2,562	185	4,698	2,109
UK	2,250	124	8,981	1,699
Italy	2,055	187	2,223	2,445
Spain	1,410	49	2,166	846
Netherlands	780	56	2,344	496
Poland	469	100	253	258
Belgium	468	31	1,241	454
Sweden	459	50	853	184
Greece	305	7	533	435
Portugal	229	24	497	213
Ireland	207	2	2,378	197
China	7,298	3,305	635	1970

(source : Wikipedia & CIA fact book)

Granted the Chinese Communist Party ruled with an iron fist at the time of Mao Zedong held absolute power in the CCP. The “cultural revolution” in 1976 that brought Deng Xiaoping into power transformed the economy. This transformation would not have been possible but for the foundation set by Mao Zedong.

True Sheikh Mujibur Rahman could have assumed power and ruled with an iron fist, but the foundation for a better governance may have been laid. It is quite possible that today we would be having a government who is interested in the welfare of the country and able to plan for the future. In the Chinese system of governance the government does not owe any reciprocal obligation or dependence to any particular section of the population but to the entire population of the country. The government is thereby in a position to plan for the future; and, importantly, within its means.

Now dear readers tell me what is this that is so much malignant of BAKSAL based upon.; on facts or on fiction (result of the mental slavery to the media dished out by the west)?

BAKSAL may not have been formed at the appropriate time and situation of the country; its formation by the amalgamation of Awami League with Krishak Sramik Party may have been viewed with forebodings by many people but there is nothing MALIGNANT about BAKSAL itself.

## BANGLADESH IN 2050

To make a fairly intelligent guess of what Bangladesh will be in 2050, one will do well to look at current relevant statistics.

For comparison purpose I have chosen countries that are projected to be the highest eight populous countries in 2050.

Figure 1 shows the population growth since 1950 up to 2050.

(Figures in '000)

<b>RANKING</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2050</b>
1	India	357,561	1,006,937	1,230,484	1,351,601	1,572,055
2	China	554,760	1,275,133	1,410,217	1,470,787	1,462,050
3	USA	157,813	283,230	321,225	346,822	397,063
4	Pakistan	39,659	141,256	204,267	250,981	344,170
5	Indonesia	79,538	212,092	250,068	272,911	311,335
6	Nigeria	29,790	113,862	165,313	202,957	278,788
7	Bangladesh	41,783	137,430	183,159	210,823	265,432
8	Brazil	53,075	170,406	201,393	218,980	247,244

(Figure-1)

Figure 2 shows the same countries' area and population density

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>AREA (SQ.KM)</b>	<b>DENSITY (2012) per Sq. Km</b>	<b>DENSITY (2050) per Sq. Km</b>
India	3,166,414	368	496
China	9,596,960	140	152
USA	9,826,675	32	40
Pakistan	881,912	224	390
Indonesia	1,904,569	125	163
Nigeria	923,768	176	302
Bangladesh	143,998	1034	1843
Brazil	8,514,877	23	29

(Figure- 2)

Figure 3 shows same countries by population below poverty line

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>BELOW POVERTY LINE IN %</b>
India	25.0
China	28.0
USA	12.0
Pakistan	24.0
Indonesia	13.3
Nigeria	70.0
Bangladesh	40.0
Brazil	26.0

(Figure – 3)

Figure 4 shows the financial health of the same countries.  
(Fibures in million \$)

COUNTRY	GDP	PUBLIC DEBT	EXTERNAL DEBT	F.E RESERVES	EXPORTS	IMPORTS
India	1,850,401	954,992	335,000	286,019	303,700	488,600
China	7,298,147	1,885,841	635,500	3,240,010	1,898,000	1,743,468
USA	15,094,025	15,712,880	15,813,740	149,836	1,511,000	2,344,000
Pakistan	210,566	126,550	57,210	17,800	25,350	32,710
Indonesia	636,059	155,834	196,100	111,528	208,900	127,100
Nigeria	213,129	37,511	11,020	36,810	101,000	34,180
Bangladesh	115,388	42,347	24,460	10,980	23,860	21,340
Brazil	2,417,570	1,315,158	310,800	374,000	250,800	219,600

(Figure – 4)

What are our resources:

1. Land for agriculture
2. Inland water-bodies for fish
3. Sea coast for fish
4. Gas
5. Coal

#### LAND FOR AGRICULTURE

- Total area : 143,998 square kilometers
- Land mass : 90.4 % = 130,174 sq. km.
- Water mass : 9.6% = 13,824 sq. km.
- Forest area : 6.7% of land mass = 8,722 sq. km.
- Agricultural area : 69.5% of land mass = 90,471 sq. km
- Arable area : 88.1% of agricultural area = 79,705 sq. km.

What the above means is that in 2050 the population of 265,432,000 will have to feed off 79,705 sq. km.; i.e. 7,970,500 hectares (1 sq. km. = 100 hectares) less the increase in housing, industries, roads, etc.

Exact rice production is hard to get by, and also varies from year to year. Current production is around 25 million tons; give or take 10% for yearly variation. We are barely able to meet the country's rice requirement at the moment; at times over a million tons are required to be imported to feed the entire population. The level of our population below the poverty line (40%) indicates that 40% of our population, roughly sixty million, are ill-fed or hungry. By 2050 a substantial part of the arable area will have been encroached by housings, roads, industries, etc. and we may see a reduction of up to 10%. That means the level of our rice production, despite in advances being achieved in productivity, thanks to the efforts of BRRI and its dedicated scientists, will be below present level of around 25 million tons per annum. How will the country feed the 100 million mouths that will be added by 2050! The cost of importing 20 million tons of rice will cost (at today's price) US Dollars 10 billion.

#### WAYERWAYS FOR FISH

There was a time when the inland water bodies supplied the majority of the requirement of the population with sweet water fish. The hoars in the north eastern part of Bangladesh – Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Netrokona and Kishorganj – were rich in fish. So also were the inland rivers and other water bodies. But over-fishing over the many years, dwindling of wetlands, industrial pollution & contamination have had their toll. Many rivers have been choked to death by industrial pollution. Many species have become extinct and many are



being so depleted that extinction is probable. But still millions in the districts mentioned above depend on fishing for livelihood.

#### SEA COAST

Being a delta region Bangladesh is blessed with a coastal line rich in nutrients for the fish. But here again over-fishing has had its toll. Catches are becoming smaller and smaller. Many millions inhabiting the coastal areas depend on the seas for their livelihood.

#### GAS

As per Petrobangla estimates the remaining reserve of proven + probable gas is 16,739.44 billion cubic feet. The total production and consumption in 2011-12 was 708.90 billion cubic feet. Further explorations are being conducted by BAPEX (onshore) and Conoco Phillips (offshore). Optimists and pessimists are at odds on further discoveries of large fields of gas. For long-term policy decisions it is safer to err on the pessimistic side than on the optimistic. Policy makers should consider further discoveries a bonus than to take them in policy decisions. That means gas reserve will run out, at the present rate of production and consumption in 24 years.

One kilo-watt hour of electricity production consumes about 8 cft of gas and one ton of urea fertilizer requires 33,500 cft of gas.

#### COAL

According to Petrobangla statistics the probable reserves in the five fields discovered till date – Khalashpur, Baropukuria, Fulbari, Dighipara&Jamalpur – together is estimated at 3.3 billion metric tons. So far there has been no political will to mine for this reserve of coal. One ton of coal produces 6.67 kilo-watt per hour electricity.

Judging from electricity consumption of other developing countries we would need to generate at least 30,000 MW (from current 5,000MW) of electricity by 2050 if we are to maintain a minimum standard of living. The average per capita consumption (watts per person) for some countries are shown below.

Malaysia	: 377
Thailand	: 225
Vietnam	: 127
India	: 107
Indonesia	: 65
Pakistan	: 44
Sri Lanka	: 44
Bangladesh	: 19

The coal reserve mentioned above will last for over 80 years with electricity production of 30,000 MW.

Now we are in 2050:

1. Population: 265,432,000
2. Arable Land area: 7,000,000 hectares (Reduced by 10%)
3. Inland Water-Bodies: Depleted of all fish
4. Coastal Sea: Substantially depleted of fish
5. Gas: Reserves emptied since last 10 years
6. Coal: 3.3 billion tons in reserve

Rice production has gone drastically because there is no foreign exchange to import fertilizer. There is no electricity, no industry, no jobs, no schools; with 50% of the population

starving and 30% ill-fed and utter lawlessness. Conditions are ripe for a peoples' revolution. Remember the French Revolution of 1789-1799?

What and who will survive the revolution is anybody's guess.

WHAT THEN SHOULD THE POLICY MAKERS DO NOW:

They should plan for the survival of the Bangladeshi people for at the least 100 years from now based on available statistics. Unfortunately the much trumpeted multi-party system allows for policy makers to plan for five years only; the term of their governance. The long term planning institution MUST not be affected by change in governments or ministers or bureaucrats.

Assuming one such long term planning institution does come into being; then what would be its priorities and short-medium-long term policies.

I would venture to put population control at the top of the ladder; followed by:

1. Coal Mining
2. Restoration of the wetlands and inland water-bodies to their natural state
3. Set policies to stimulate local manufacture and production; get out of WTO.
4. Expand technical and scientific education
5. Entice NRB's to return to their homeland with their money and technological & financial expertise.
6. Expand Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation with scientists and engineers who can guide small and cottage industries entrepreneurs with technical knowledge.
7. Expand BRRI which is already doing a fine job.
8. Re-vitalize BADC and take out the fertilizer importation and distribution from out of the clutches of corrupt scruples businessmen. Fertilizer usage in a scientific method is the crying need of the day.
9. Get bureaucrats out of the government and autonomous organizations and corporations and give these organizations and corporations full responsibility with financial autonomy. Let the governments and its bureaucrats restrict themselves to policy matters.
10. Cut down on luxury imports.
11. Increase tariffs of gas & electricity to appropriate levels.
12. Planning of cities is not enough; there should be country planning. In today's IT world virtual cities and countries can be created in hours.
13. Take out the traffic planning from the police and put it under management of engineers and scientists and computer specialists.
14. The last, but not the least, give back the ordinary workers (industrial workers, farm workers, rickshaw-pullers, laborers, et el) their DIGNITY. Any man/woman who earns his/her living honestly deserves his/her dignity.

Every day, every hour, every minute and every second that we procrastinate will lead us to the inevitable.

**Our forefathers left us a place we now hail as SONAR BANGLA, but what are we leaving for our posterity; the inevitable peoples' revolution?  
Our posterity will curse those in governance to hell!**

## DEMOCRACY – A CRITIQUE

Today's papers and magazines are replete with articles championing the virtues of Democracy. The western world is provoking covertly, on occasions openly, Asian and African populace to demand democracy in their countries.

I would like to place before you some observations/quotations on democracy made by renowned philosophers, statesmen and thinkers on Democracy.

**Plato's Ship Analogy** : Democratic self-government does not work, according to Plato, because ordinary people have not learned how to run the ship of state. They are not familiar enough with such things as economics, military strategy, conditions in other countries, or the confusing intricacies of law and ethics. They are not inclined to acquire such knowledge. The effort and self-discipline required for serious study is not something most people enjoy. In their ignorance they tend to vote for politicians who beguile them with appearances and nebulous talk, and inevitably find themselves at the mercy of administrations and conditions over which they have no control because they do not understand what is happening around them. They are guided by unreliable emotions more than by careful analysis, and they are lured into adventurous wars and victimized by costly defeats that could have been entirely avoided.

**Plato in the *Republic*** : As a just and healthy person is governed by knowledge and reason, a just society must be under the control of society's most cultivated and best informed minds, "lovers of wisdom". Just societies cannot be run by big money "lovers of money" or by armed forces "lovers of honor" with their narrow agendas. Limitless desire for wealth and blind ambition must be watched and contained as potential public dangers. The most informed minds must determine objectively, with due consideration of all points of view, what the most healthy and practical goals for the commonwealth are.

**James Madison**: A people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both.

**Commentary** : The challenge that Plato's critique of democracy still poses is the question whether the citizens of today's democracies are interested and informed enough to participate meaningfully in the democratic process. Are today's self-proclaimed democracies in fact societies where people are "their own governors"—where they are well enough informed to be effectively in control of their commonwealth and their lives? Do the citizens of these societies really understand why wars are declared, resources committed, debts incurred, relations denied, and so forth? Could it be that a majority of citizens live in cognitive haze that reduces them to voting on the basis of uninformed convictions, catchy slogans, and altogether vague hunches and feeling?

**Commentary** : Hitler, it is worth remembering, was elected by a democratic vote, and it is surely not irrelevant to ask whether those who voted for him did not suffer from an unacceptable degree of ignorance and lack of political education.

**Lee Kuan Yew & Mahatir bin Mohamad**: both claimed in the 1990's that Asian values were significantly different from western values and included a sense of loyalty and foregoing personal freedoms for sake of social stability and prosperity, and therefore authoritarian government is more appropriate in Asia than democracy.

## Quotes on the character and nature of democracy

**H.L. Mencken** : Under democracy one party devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule – and both commonly succeed, and are right.

**H.L. Mencken** : Government (democratic) is a broker in pillage, and every election is a sort of advance auction in stolen goods.

**H.L. Mencken** : Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want and deserve to get it good and hard.

**H.L. Mencken** : Democracy is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage.

**H.L. Mencken** : Democracy is a pathetic belief in the collective wisdom of individual ignorance.

**Walter Lippman** : What the public does is not to express its opinion but to align itself for or against a proposal. If that theory is accepted, we must abandon the notion that democratic government can be the direct expression of the will of the people. We must abandon the notion that the people govern. Instead, we must adopt the theory that, by their occasional mobilizations as a majority, people support or oppose the individuals who actually govern. We must say that the popular will does not direct continuously but that it intervenes occasionally.

**Bernard Shaw** : Democracy is a form of government that substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.

**Thomas Jefferson** : A democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where fifty-one percent of the people may take away the rights of the other forty-nine.

**John Simon** : Democracy encourages the majority to decide things about which the majority is ignorant.

**Clement Atlee** : Democracy means government by discussion, but it is effective if you can stop people talking.

**Rivarol**: The absolute ruler may be a Nero, but he is sometimes a Titus or Marc Aurelius; the people is often Nero, but never Marc Aurelius.

**James Madison** : Measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. A pure democracy can admit no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will be felt by a majority, and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party. Hence it is, that democracies have ever found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have, in general, been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths.

**Karl Kraus** : Democracy means the opportunity to be everyone's slave.

**Padraig Deignan**: Democracy is the counting of heads, not what's in them!

**H.L. Mencken** : Democracy is a pathetic belief in the collective wisdom of individual ignorance. Democracy is also a form of worship. It is the worship of Jackals by Jackasses. Democracy is only a dream: it should be put in the same category as Arcadia, Santa Claus, and Heaven. Democracy is the art and science of running the circus from the monkey cage. Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard. Every decent man is ashamed of the government he lives under. Every normal man must be tempted, at times, to spit in his hands, hoist the black flag, and begin slitting throats.

**Friedrich Nietzsche** : That which now calls itself democracy differs from older forms of government solely in that it drives with new horses: the streets are the same old streets, and the wheels are likewise the same old wheels.

**David Friedman** : “democratic” decision making is a means for finding and implementing the will of the majority; it has no other function. It serves, not to encourage diversity, but to prevent it.

**Fred Reed** : The proper response toward what we occasionally imagine to be democracy, methinks, is to retain one’s self respect by not participating in it. Voting in particular is an embarrassment, being a public display of weak character and low intelligence. Let us face the truth: Democracy, like spitting in public or the Roman games, is the proper activity of the lower intellectual and moral classes. It amounts to collusion in one’s own suckering. Those who wash regularly should not stoop to democracy.

**Thomas Carlyle** : I do not believe in the collective wisdom of individual ignorance.

**John Stuart Mackenzie** : Tyranny is usually tempered with assassination and Democracy must be tempered with culture. In the absence of this, it turns into a representation of collective folly.

**Unknown** : Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote.

**Keith Preston** : It is a logical absurdity to equate democracy with freedom in the way that mainstream political philosophers and commentators typically do. A system where individuals and minorities are at the mercy of unconstrained majorities hardly constitutes freedom in a meaningful way.

**L.A. Rollins** : Democracy is government of the sheep, by the shepherds, for the wolves.

**Victor Hugo** : Now, get seven million five hundred thousand votes to declare that two and two make five, that the straight line is the longest road, that the whole is less than its part; get it declared by eight millions, by ten millions, by a hundred million votes, you will not have advanced a step. Well, then, now you are going to be surprised. There are axioms in probity, in honesty, in justice, as there are axioms in geometry; and the truths of morality are no more at the mercy of a vote than are the truths of algebra. The notion of good and evil cannot be resolved by universal suffrage. It is not given to a ballot to make the false become true and the unjust the just. The human conscience cannot be put to vote.

**Jonathan David Morris** : We talk about democracy as if it’s a safeguard for individual rights... Instead, it’s become our way of intruding on rights, allegedly in the name of that most collectivist concepts: The Common Good.

**John T. Wenders** : There is a difference between democracy and freedom. Freedom is not measured by the ability to vote. It is measured by the breadth of those things on which we do not vote. Freedom must be protected from democracy.

**Mohammad Iqbal** : The intellect of two thousand asses cannot bring forth a single man’s thought. Democracy is a system where people are counted not weighed.

**Winston Churchill** : The biggest argument against democracy is a five minute discussion with the average voter.

**Stephen Townshend** : Democracy doesn’t favour the individual above all else; nor does it promise to. One of its greatest failings is that single voices of reason are too easily drowned out by the cacophony of the masses.

**William J. Murray** : Good, law-abiding, value oriented citizens are the ultimate in hypocrisy; “majority rules” and the law are exactly the same as being the biggest bully on the block with the biggest stick – it is might that allows one group to force another to live by its code of conduct.

**Some others:**

- Democracy is people taking liberties with others’ freedom via the ballot box.
- Democracy, properly understood, is NOT synonymous with liberty. In fact, the two often clash.
- Gang rape is democracy in action.

## CRISIS IN DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM

I posit that “Democracy and Capitalism” is a lethal combination.

Let us look into these two terms “Democracy” and “Capitalism” stripped of its veneer.

Democracy is a much heralded term and the Democracy in America is considered the ultimate in governance. Everyone knows about the American system; for it is considered the ideal. There are two major parties: Democrats and Republicans. Every four years these two major contenders vie for the votes of the public. A portion of the American public are either Democratic or Republican by tradition; most of them steadfast but some waiver in their allegiance. Then there is the larger proportion of average Americans who are not committed to any of these two parties but make a choice come every election come four years. Now what are the parameters by which these average Americans to make their choice. They want a decent life: job, good pay, social security, schools and colleges for their children, affordable medicare, security at home and at work and many others that make up for a decent and sustained living. The average American is not disposed to learn or know about the economy of the country: how much dollars are in circulation, earnings of the government from income taxes, import-export balances, financial disciplines, deficit budgets, and many other complex and complicated matters that the people running the affairs of a country need to know and be well-informed. Come election day and they take into consideration: whether their lives have been comfortable under the immediate government, which party promises tax cuts on either the poor or the rich and the like. The party that promises to enhance their decent living to a more comfortable one gets their vote. Pretty simple and straight-forward.

Capitalism is an economic system that is based on private ownership of the means of production and the creation of goods and services for profit. It is a system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods by investments that are determined by private decisions, and by prices, production and distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market. A good economic system is non-political by definition. Governments can facilitate the economic system but not interfere in its workings. Excepting a few cases, the private owners and corporate are motivated and driven by greed. Then add to that a financial system that has crept into the capitalism that neither produces goods and services nor, by itself, contribute directly to a nation's economy in the conventional sense.

A country's government depends on revenues earned by taxing its citizens, businesses, production and distribution of goods and services. These revenue earnings must necessarily be distributed and spent on running the affairs of the country: maintaining well-armed forces, law and order in the country, infrastructures, social services, hospitals, medicare, etc.. Obama's budget for 2012 shows revenue earnings of US\$ 2.627 trillion against an expenditure of US\$ 3.729 trillion ( a deficit of US\$ 1.102 trillion).

So the government is placed in a no-win situation. On the one hand it cannot interfere with the capitalist economic system it has adopted and, on the other hand, has to placate the voting public with expenses it can ill afford. To advocate austerity will be to lose the election. Since the early seventy's every successive government has been running a deficit budget in the tune of US\$ 1 trillion a year. The same is the situation in the European countries.

The table below illustrates the financial statistics of the western countries (multi-party democracies).

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>GDP in Billion \$</b>	<b>FOREX in Billion \$</b>	<b>EXTERNAL DEBT in Billion \$</b>	<b>PUBLIC DEBT in Billion \$</b>
EU Countries	16,242	925	13,720	12,993
USA	14,526	146	15,571	13,706
Germany	3,286	263	4,713	2,758
France	2,562	185	4,698	2,109
UK	2,250	124	8,981	1,699
Italy	2,055	187	2,223	2,445
Spain	1,410	49	2,166	846
Netherlands	780	56	2,344	496
Poland	469	100	253	258
Belgium	468	31	1,241	454
Sweden	459	50	853	184
Greece	305	7	533	435
Portugal	229	24	497	213
Ireland	207	2	2,378	197
China	7,298	3,305	635	1970

(source : Wikipedia & CIA fact book)

The figures above are based on 2010 statistics. Since then the situation has worsened in America and European countries. Today the public debt in the US is around US\$ 16.10 trillion. The figures for China has improved. Today the GDP of China is around US\$ 11 trillion.

Whilst the finances of countries like Greece, Spain, Italy and other Euro countries are taking a nose dive the finances of USA is at the edge of the cliff.



## THE DELUSION

When I say “Multi-party Democracy” the immediate response is “Freedom”

When I say “Single Party Democracy” the immediate response is “Authoritarian”.

The word “Democracy” is composed of two elements of the Greek words: ‘demo’ which means ‘people or public’ and ‘kratos’ which means ‘power’. By definition democracy means “peoples power”.

In its idealistic form every person of the community takes part in the deliberations and decisions of the affairs of the community. In the present complex world this is not achievable as the affairs of the state requires information and knowledge in international affairs, economics, financial practices, resources, criminal and civil laws, etc., which are beyond the competence of an ordinary citizen. An ordinary person has neither the time, nor disposition nor capability to acquire all those knowledge and information. One must bear in mind that countries are co-operating but at the same time competing for scarce resources and markets.

The countries that go by “democracy” are really not “democracies” but merely approximations to “democracy”. Democratic societies contain elements of both collectivism and individualism.

Allied to the above definitions we must now consider the definitions of “collectivism” and “individualism”

Collectivism is any philosophic, political, religious, economic or social outlook that emphasizes the interdependence of every human being.

Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology or social outlook that stresses the moral worth of the individual.

The eastern culture has always emphasized the interdependence of every human beings and thereby we have always adopted the “collectivism” philosophy. Whilst the western culture has always emphasized the moral worth of the individual and thereby have always adopted the “individualism” philosophy. In plain language the eastern culture places the society above the individual whilst the western culture places the individual before society. As to why this is so we must go back to thousands of years of human evolution and trace back the anthropology and neuro-anthropology and history of our forefathers; the scope of which is beyond this article. Suffice it to say that our societies’ are different due to evolution under different conditions.

The question as to which of these two is better or has more merits is debatable and we can go on debating till the end of this world.

As mentioned above, democratic societies contain elements of both collectivism and individualism. The difference is the extent of content of each in the system.

The western multi-party system lays more emphasis on the individual whilst the single-party lays more on the society.

We have no other means of judging the merits of multi-party against the single-party democracies than to look at the statistics of today’s world.

The table below shows the financial statistics of the major countries.

COUNTRY	GDP in Billion \$	FOREX in Billion \$	EXTERNAL DEBT in Billion \$	PUBLIC DEBT in Billion \$
EU Countries	16,242	925	13,720	12,993
USA	14,526	146	15,571	13,706
Germany	3,286	263	4,713	2,758
France	2,562	185	4,698	2,109
UK	2,250	124	8,981	1,699
Italy	2,055	187	2,223	2,445
Spain	1,410	49	2,166	846
Netherlands	780	56	2,344	496
Poland	469	100	253	258
Belgium	468	31	1,241	454
Sweden	459	50	853	184
Greece	305	7	533	435
Portugal	229	24	497	213
Ireland	207	2	2,378	197
China	7,298	3,305	635	1970

(source : Wikipedia & CIA fact book)

The percentage of the population below the poverty line in USA and China are 12% and 2.8% respectively.

Consider the fact that USA and EU Countries had a head start over China in industrialization and technology.

Above statistics clearly shows that China has performed better than the western countries.

So, why is this euphoria with Multi-party system and condemnation of the Single-party system?

The fact that we have been educated in English language and are more familiar with the western ways coupled with the fact that we get our values from the western media is perhaps the reason for this delusion.

# DEMOCRACY, LIBERALISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## **SUBJECTS OF DEBATE:**

1. DOES IDEAL DEMOCRACY EXIST
2. WHAT IS LIBERAL-DEMOCRACY
3. IS THERE NONLIBERAL-DEMOCRACY
4. DOES LIBERALISM LEAD TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
5. DOES LIBERALISM LEAD TO ECONOMIC DOWNTURN
6. DOES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEAD TO LIBERALISM
7. DOES ECONOMIC TURNDOWN LEAD TO LESS LIBERALISM

## **DOES IDEAL DEMOCRACY EXIST**

I posit that Ideal Democracy is a concept that cannot be achieved and practiced in the present complex world.

Democracy exists only in its approximated form. There is a dominant tendency to advocate that only a multi-party system and the methodology of establishing it is democratic and that the single-party system is not. This is a biased assumption with political intonations and does not stand critical examination. Both multi-party and single-party system of governance by representation are approximations to democracy.

## **WHAT IS LIBERAL-DEMOCRACY**

“Liberal-democracy” is a misnomer. Democracy is democracy; neither liberal nor conservative. UK has three major political parties: labour, conservative and liberal. The last named party is always in the fringes; so does it mean UK is less liberal?

Actually ‘liberal democracy’ is carefully constructed to mislead the public into its import. What otherwise grammatically correct term would be ‘liberal and democratic’.

Now let us see the definition of ‘liberal’. The best definition I have found is in a negated form: not limited to or by established, traditional, orthodox or authoritarian attitudes.

In the positive form “liberal” means ‘licentious’. Western authors are extremely reluctant to equate ‘liberal’ with ‘radical’ and some would go to pains to explain in abstract hypothesis the difference between the two.

Now, if ‘not liberal’ can be grouped with ‘authoritarian’, what holds back from grouping ‘liberalism’ with ‘radicalism’?

In any discussion a precise understanding of the terminology is in order; or else no conclusion can be reached.

## **WHAT IS NON-LIBERAL-DEMOCRACY**

I have not across this word in political discourses and it can be assumed this term does not exist. By inference “liberal democracy” is a misnomer.

### **DOES LIBERALISM LEAD TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Studies by competent analysts show that liberalism does not lead to economic developments.

### **DOES LIBERALISM LEAD TO ECONOMIC DOWNTURN**

It's only been four years since the US financial crisis which could have led to worldwide recession and accompanying hardship to almost all the people of the world. Today Euro-Zone is reeling under a formidable financial crisis and might still trigger a worldwide recession. These financial crisis are due mostly to the financial liberalism as well as non-financial liberalism. Some say there has been "too much liberalism" that was the cause. Now "how much liberalism" is "good liberalism" and "how much less liberalism" is "not liberalism"?

### **DOES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEAD TO LIBERALISM**

Studies do indicate that economic development does promote liberalism. Economic emancipation lifts a great load off a person's mind. He can look at the world with a satisfying eye and feel generous; this generosity begets liberalism. Remember a German joke in the late eighties, when there was a worldwide financial crisis and Germany was one of the countries badly affected, about shipwreck of Turkish migrants? About four hundred Turks were smuggling to enter into Germany by a ship which got wrecked. The joke was that the shipwreck of four hundred people was a "tragedy" but that these four hundred Turks were able to swim ashore in Germany was a "catastrophe". Since then, German economy has picked up, and thousands of Turks have migrated to Germany where they were openly received.

### **DOES ECONOMIC TURNDOWN LEAD TO LESS LIBERALISM**

I would hate to be in the shoes of Asians now living comfortably in Europe and America if, and when, the financial crisis spills over from Euro-Zone to America and suddenly people start losing their jobs and means of survival! Greece was one of the most liberal countries in Europe; in the last election a hard-line party which promised to expel all migrants won eighteen seats. Today there are reports of frequent Xenophobic attacks on migrant workers in Greece. Optimists may rubbish this as purely accidental incidents and not a norm. I hope they are correct; but indications ignored could lead to grief.

## MY UNDERSTANDING OF BUDDHISM

To understand Buddhism one has to bear in mind that the reason Buddha renounced his princely status and wandered for years was to search for origin of the sufferings that he saw in his people. His search was not to find the meaning of life or to find out its origin; but simply to find the causes of sufferings that human beings experience if life and the right path to free oneself from such sufferings.

Volumes have been written on Buddhism and I have tried reading many. But on each occasion I find myself unable to proceed further when I come across, and invariably do come across, the doctrine on Dependent Origination (Paticcasamuppada) being interpreted to mean birth and rebirth of life in the conventional sense. The basic doctrine "Anatta" of Buddha stands negated by this interpretation.

Buddha's enlightenment came from his understanding of the mind. Mind is defined in Buddhism as being a non-physical phenomena which perceives, thinks, recognizes, experiences and reacts to the object (environment). It is there when consciousness arises and passes away when consciousness ceases. It is a never ending cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The mind (origination of all things) arises upon consciousness dependent on the particular phenomena (object) and state of mental formation. This, I understand to mean Dependent Origination.

Many neurologists, neuroscientists, anthropologists and phenomenologists, individually or in partnerships have tried to understand the mind and its relation with the brain and they have produced volumes of research papers and articles. But none has been able to claim his theory to be correct. The question is there without a universally accepted answer.

The interdependency of the brain, consciousness and mind cannot be studied in the laboratory. The physical brain can be taken out of the skull, bisected and dissected still it will not yield the answer. Probes can be connected to various parts of the brain and neurological actions of the brain can be recorded but still this, together with the anatomy, does not yield the answer. It is only by subjective reduction that answer to the question is possible. The presence of the following defilements in the mental formation makes it impossible:

1. Greed (Lobha)
2. Anger, hate (dosa)
3. Delusion, illusion (moha)
4. Conceit (mana)
5. Wrong views (micchaditthi)
6. Doubt (vicikiccha)
7. Torpor (thinam)
8. Restlessness (uddhaccam)
9. Shamelessness (ahirikam)
10. Recklessness (anottappam)

It is only when one's mental formation is freed of these defilements can one understand the interdependency between brain, consciousness and mind.

After renouncing his princely status, Siddhartha wandered for years trying to find the truth of suffering. Siddhartha ultimately came to Bodh Gaya where he found a suitable place for meditation. There he remained, emphasizing a meditation called "space-like concentration on the Dharmakaya" in which he focused single-pointedly on the ultimate nature of all phenomena. After training in his meditation for six years he realized he was close to

attaining full enlightenment. He then went to Bodh Gaya and seated himself under the Bodhi Tree and continued his meditation until he entered the space-like concentration of the Dharmakya. It was then that Siddhartha gained enlightenment and became the Buddha.

The Enlightenment that: "All things are preceded by the mind, led by the mind, created by the mind". Suffering can be mitigated by cleansing the mind of the defilements mentioned above. All teachings following this enlightenment are corollaries for practices to be followed for this cleansing of the mind.

## DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

Buddha was the world's first Phenomenologist; the study of the structure of subjective experience and consciousness (mind).

"All things are preceded by the mind, led by the mind, created by the mind".

"The mind is formless, shapeless, colourless and allows for consciousness to arise in it and engage with the phenomena(objects as interpreted by human sensibility and understanding).

Mind is defined in Buddhism as a non-physical phenomenon which perceives, thinks, recognizes, experiences and reacts to the environment. It is there and yet it is not there, it arises and passes away to arise again and pass away again, and so on and so on. It is a never-ending cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The mind arises when with consciousness of an object. The mind (origination of all things) arises dependent on the particular phenomena (object). Thoughts, perceptions, emotions finally follow from the particular phenomenon from which the mind arose.

This, I hold true to be, is what Buddha meant in Paticcasamuppada – dependent origination.

The doctrine preached by Buddha would be negated if dependent origin is to mean physical birth and death and rebirth.

## FREE WILL

The first verse of Dhamapada reads:

"All things are preceded by the mind, led by the mind, created by the mind."

But the Mind itself is subjective to the mental formations; of which Buddha had enumerated 52 states. Consciousness of an object would be, depending upon which of the mental states at that time and space is active, will direct the mind and volition to action. So from the time of arising of consciousness there are 52 possibilities for volition to take control.

## DOWNSIDE IN MEDIUM OF TEACHING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The reader will think I must be nuts to even spare a thought against learning in the English language. Of course English is the international language and a tool to success in life. You are fluent in English and you automatically get preference for a job over someone who is not. The English language allows one access to modern science and technology and, also importantly, to the world of financial institutions.

This perception is common to us in the subcontinent.

Ever wonder how Japanese, Koreans, Taiwanese, Chinese, Thais, etc. are economically and technologically superior to us? Peoples' in these countries are educated in their own mother tongue and know very little English.

We simply are overlooking the fact that language is more than getting jobs; that it plays a vital part in the development of the brain and thereby mental faculties. A child learns to interpret into language the emotions, sentiments and abstract thoughts by imitating their parents and elders in the language that they speak. These emotions, sentiments and abstract thoughts are linked in the brain with language. A child's language development is crucial to its intellectual development and vice-versa. By interacting with its environment, a child develops the ability to develop private inner speech. "Inner speech is thinking in pure meanings; it is the link between the secondary signal system of the social world and the thought of the individual"; Barry J. Zimmerman and Dale H. Schunk. Through the development of inner speech, children straddle the divide between thought and language, eventually being able to express their thoughts coherently to others.

Think of the brain (mind) as the biggest library where your library card is the language.

A society best expresses, and thereby propagates, its culture and creativity through language.

Now let us have a look at a Bengali child who is, from a very young age, taught with English language as the medium of teaching (English medium schools). This may have been less harmful had the courses had not been those prescribed by Oxford or Cambridge and books, in English language, were written by Bengali authors and upon matters typically Bengali. Unfortunately the books used in our English medium schools are written by English authors on English matters. Hidden inside the apparently harmless words and descriptions is the English culture. Unknowingly the child's mental faculties start to lean towards the culture of the language represents. By the time the child completes its high school he/she is no longer a typical Bengali person rich in Bengali culture. On the other hand he/she has developed mental an alien culture. He/she identifies himself/herself by English culture. He/she sees no disadvantage in that; but rather the advantage as he/she sees that the English educated get better jobs.

Apart from causing disharmony in his immediate family or in the society, financial outlook is comparatively brighter for the English educated. What they do not realize is that they have missed out on the rich culture of their forefathers, their society, their country and the region. They have missed out on the rich Bengali literature and writings of famous Bengali philosophers, writers and teachers: Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, Nazrul and many

others. They perhaps do not realize that they have missed out on age old Bengali adages, proverbs, idioms and axioms which are rich in Bengali wisdom, culture and philosophy, in ways, reflecting Bengali outlook.

In our school days there were just a few schools teaching in English medium. My friends from mofusil schools, where the medium of teaching was in Bengali with English as second language, who joined us in college life barely spoke English and were a little better off in reading and writing. But by the time we graduated from the universities these friends could read and write as well as those from English medium schools, though not that fluent in speech. Some friends went abroad to do higher studies where quite a few stayed back. These friends now read, write and speak as fluently, if not better, than the English.

I, having been schooled in an English medium school, envy these friends. I envy them for their richness in Bengali culture, which I missed, and, at the same time, can express themselves, both written and verbal, equally, if not better, than me in the English language.



## FALLACY OF DEMOCRACY

The word “democracy” combines two elements (Greek) *demos* (which means “people”) and *kratos* (which means “force” or “power”); “people force” or “people power”. It is an ideal egalitarian form of government in which all the citizens of a nation together determine public policy, the laws and actions of the state, requiring that all citizens have an equal opportunity to express their opinion.

In practice, “democracy” is the extent to which a given system approximates this ideal, and a given political system is referred to as “a democracy” if it allows a certain approximation to ideal democracy.

The most common system that is deemed “democratic” in the current concept is parliamentary democracy and presidential democracy in which the voting public takes part in elections and chooses politicians to represent them. The problem starts from here.

No less a person than James Madison maintained “A people who mean to be their own governor must arm themselves with the power of knowledge gives. A popular government without the knowledge or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or perhaps both”. Ask yourself ‘oh you’ the public! Are you knowledgeable and informed on state affairs such as economy, international finance, trade balance, resource management, criminal and civil laws, international politics, etc., etc., etc.. If I were to ask whether you know what are hedge fund, derivatives, futures contracts, Incoterms, deficit budget, surplus budget, GDP, public debt, external debt, forex reserves, etc., etc.; could you realistically give answers? In all likelihood you will say it does not concern you. You are happy to do your share of the day’s work to earn a living for your family, and that’s all it counts. At the end of your work you are satisfied to sit back and watch the entertainment and news dished out in the television. It is not far-fetched to see today’s television consumers as masses of mental prisoners who get their values and views of the world from the images and programs that powerful corporations or governments keep feeding into their minds. Most viewers are in no position, nor have the disposition, to check the facts. I would request the reader to look up the functions of the parliament in our constitution. According to Bangladesh constitution a parliament member is required to perform the following functions:

1. Enactment of Legislation
2. Consent to Taxation and Control of Public Expenditure
3. Ensuring Accountability of the Government.

Just as an academic interest we may compare the above with those written in the Indian constitution:

1. Controlling the Executive
2. Law Making
3. Controlling the Finance
4. Raising Deliberations
5. Constituent Functions
6. Electoral Functions
7. Judicial Functions

It goes without saying a member of the parliament has to fully conversant in law, finance and management to discharge his functions. Now tell me how many of the parliament members in Bangladesh actually qualify to discharge the functions he is elected for.

And you still claim to live in a “democracy”.

You are beguiled by the high standards of living in the western democracies and presume prosperity comes with democracy. You cannot be more wrong. The end of the high standard of living in the west, which you so long for, is near. Look at Greece and Spain. UK and France are in recession. Do I need to draw any conclusions here?

Prosperity of a country is independent of the democracy or for that matter oligarchy, monarchy, etc.

I would like to end by quoting Plato : *As a just and healthy person is governed by knowledge and reason, a just society must be under the control of society's most cultivated and most informed minds, its “lovers of wisdom”.*

## INCOMPLETE PERSON AND THE MAKING OF A DE-CULTURIZED & DE-SOCIALIZED WORLD

I posit that:

- a human being born and brought up in cities are incomplete persons
- The world is heading towards a de-cultured & de-socialized place

I hold to be true that a human being becomes the person that he is by growing up in a particular community, learning to speak the language, and to participate in the life of the community. There must be some community for him to grow up in, if he is to become the person and, in more than purely zoological sense, a humane being at all. The community he grows up makes an important difference. If his native community had been different, in all important respects he would be a different person from the one he has in fact become. So would many of the ideas, beliefs and values in terms of which he has been brought up to think and to act. He is always a *product* of some social and cultural milieu. Different traditions and cultures and civilizations are different ways of being human.

A child born in a village becomes aware of the village life immediately on birth. There are aunts, uncles, grandparents, relatives and friends of the family constantly coming and going, cuddling and consoling the child. Other mothers bring their children to introduce the newborn. The mother or relatives are carrying it in visits to relatives and friends where the child's mental faculties are exposed to the outside relationships. When the child is able to walk the whole village is free for it to roam and play with other children. It learns the hierarchy of the children structure; not to annoy the older children and with whom to form allies. At an early age the child is participating in the village functions and rituals and learns to respect the elders and to obey its parents. At this early age the child learns the values of sharing. He learns the language of the mental faculties and forms ideas, beliefs and values. By the age of seven or eight (empirical evidence) the foundation is set for the child to develop into a person: a humane being; because it has developed the sense of belongingness to a certain community – that the community cares for it and expects the child to reciprocate.

Now consider the child born in a city. Its parents relative and friend circle is limited and it contact with persons other than its parents or/and the ayah. Often the parents are too busy with their work, especially where both parents work, and its companion is the ayah. Now the ayah is a servant of the house and the child notices that the ayah obeys the parents and, on occasions gets scolded or, in rare cases beaten. This observance leads the child's mental faculties to take note of this. To overcome the situation parents put their children in day cares, kindergartens, etc. where the child can meet play with other children. But these are conducted in controlled environments and do not reflect true relationships. Real and lasting friendships with a sense of sharing are very rare. By the age of seven or eight the child has not developed any sense of belongingness to particular traditional cultures and values and has not learnt to reciprocate.

The child born in the city and brought up in it often does better in life than the child born and brought in the village. But I hold true that the village child to develop to be a true person (humane being) and the city child a purely zoological product.

Without the strong roots of human bondage a person is helpless in the present era of TV entertainment and brain washing. The city raised person is happy to do his share of the day's work to earn a living for the family, and that's all it counts. At the end of your work he or she is satisfied to sit back and watch the entertainment and news dished out in the

television. It is not far-fetched to see today's television consumers as masses of mental prisoners who get their values and views of the world from the images and programs that powerful corporations or governments keep feeding into their minds. Most viewers are in no position, nor have the disposition, to check the facts.

I hold one to be dishonest if he or she denies that he or she is not influenced by the western media that proclaims:

- Single party system is evil
- Only western type multi-party is good
- The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights is truly universal
- That democracy will lead to economic development and hence can enjoy as the western nations do.

I also hold one to be dishonest if he or she has any inkling of the above proclamations. The whites are enjoying the fruits of life so they must be right!

This is not to say that only city boys will be influenced; the village boys will also be influenced but their roots will at the least try some form of reasoning.

Unfortunately the way of our forefathers have dramatically changed over a few centuries. Our forefathers for milieu had lived in communes with ecological living as core principle.

With industrialization came the capitalist system and human beings were downgraded into numbers. Human beings were further downgraded when economists and financial wizards categorized them into percentages. Urbanization in the last few decades has been very rapid. Over half the countries of the world the urbanized population is over fifty percent. Many of the less urbanized countries are urbanizing at alarming rates. Bangladesh is 169<sup>th</sup> in the ranking with an annual growth rate of 3.4 percent. It will not be very long before all countries of the world will be over seventy percent urbanized.

What does it mean? The rich and powerful countries will set the tone of living in an urbanized world. But today those rich countries are facing economic turndown and herculean financial crisis. All the rich countries are now living on credit.

The table below shows the financial statistics of the western countries (multi-party democracies).

COUNTRY	GDP in Billion \$	FOREX in Billion \$	EXTERNAL DEBT in Billion \$	PUBLIC DEBT in Billion \$
EU Countries	16,242	925	13,720	12,993
USA	14,526	146	15,571	13,706
Germany	3,286	263	4,713	2,758
France	2,562	185	4,698	2,109
UK	2,250	124	8,981	1,699
Italy	2,055	187	2,223	2,445
Spain	1,410	49	2,166	846
Netherlands	780	56	2,344	496
Poland	469	100	253	258
Belgium	468	31	1,241	454
Sweden	459	50	853	184
Greece	305	7	533	435
Portugal	229	24	497	213
Ireland	207	2	2,378	197
China	7,298	3,305	635	1970

(source: Wikipedia & CIA fact book)

The trend towards urbanization can still be reversed in many countries if our governments take a long term macro look at the world economy. We must not look for immediate results; rather we should look for policies to serve us a hundred years from now so we can proudly say to our children we are leaving them a better world than what we found it.

Otherwise, I am afraid the world will become a de-cultured and de-socialized.

### FIRST INFORMATION REPORT (FIR)

Very often we come across robberies and killings that are not investigated by the police on grounds that the police say is “nobody has filed an FIR?”. The latest is about the driver of the vehicle carrying the APS of the then Railway Minister.

Now what is this FIR? I looked up at the Wikipedia to get some information on what is FIR and found that this practice was only practiced in India, Pakistan & Bangladesh (British India) and Japan; a legacy of the British Rule whose police force was to support the British Rule and not to serve the country. Police during British rule were today's razakkars!

I fail to understand why after over half a century we, an independent sovereign (so called!) country, did not see the irrelevance of an FIR?

**Unfortunately the least intelligent brains study law, which is left to the least brains, so when cut-and-paste of laws are the order of the day, what can we expect.**

## MAN THE ANIMAL

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, wrote: "Man is a social animal. He who lives without society is either a beast or God". This philosophical definition of mankind has since been in common usage with universal acceptance.

A "social animal" is a loosely defined term for an organism that is highly interactive with other members of its species to the point of having a recognizable and distinct society.

A "society" (human society) is a group of people related to each other through persistent relations, or a large social grouping sharing the same geographical or virtual territory, subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations. Human societies are characterized by patterns of relationships (social relationships) between individuals who share a distinct culture.

In current usage, "culture" is that which distinguishes life in one group from another group, mental context, norms, institutions and physical objects. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century culture emerged as a concept central to anthropology, encompassing all human phenomena that are not purely results of human genetics.

Traditional culture consists of the beliefs and practices held or observed by specific human groups that have been passed down from their ancestors through their grandparents, parents and society around them. Traditional culture and "Genetic Resources" are important elements of the cultural heritage and the social and historical identity of a community.

"Community" usually refers to a social unit larger than a household that share common values, beliefs and has social cohesion.

Hence by deduction man to be "social animal" must live within a society sharing traditional culture in a community.

To be a good "social animal", man must live in an ideal society of people related to each other through persistent relations and sharing the same traditional culture with its distinct beliefs and practices.

Races from prehistoric times, whose cultures were not transgressed by cultures of conquering races still live in such communities. The indigenous peoples of South America are the remnants of such ideal communities and villages. It learns to accept the social order, beliefs and norms of the village. He grows up sharing the joys and hardships of the village; knowing, and accepting, that he is a part of that society with its traditional cultures, norms, practices and beliefs. His mind is conditioned by the society and the traditional culture. He is truly a "social animal".

Unfortunately for the world different races have ventured out of their regional boundaries and conquered and superimposed their cultures on the vanquished. This is especially true of the Caucasoid and its sub-race The Aryans. Nowhere in the world is this influx of foreign races and vanquishing others than in India. In the period from 1500BC over a dozen invasions by the Aryans from west and central Asia took place; and each with each invasion the conquerors degraded the vanquished to lower status. This is why we have the formal and informal class system practiced in India. But over the years hybrid societies were formed followed by traditional cultures. This is true, varying in degrees to an extent, throughout the world.

But with industrialization relationship between peoples were changed. People started leaving their villages and migrated to towns and cities. In these towns and cities places are crowded with people belonging to different rural areas and have no, or extremely little, relationships. This is no approximation the ideal village sustains the ideal society. When a child is born, it is born to the confinements of its parent's apartment or house. Relatives are few and visits by them are far in between. Neighbors move in and out, or your parents move in and out of apartments or houses. Lasting friendships are not possible. The child grows up in the insecurity of the city. The person it becomes has no human bondages and he has no obligation to society. He is an individual ready to fend himself against the city' as opposed to the village man who fends for his village.

Today, over sixty percent of the people live in towns and cities. A strange culture called "Cyber culture" has now emerged. Here people meet other people over internet, without knowing anything about him. They share their views on subjects and matters that concern them without any attachment. They take comfort in simply knowing other people share their views. The neighbors around them, or their colleagues, no longer matter to them. They must seek solace on the internet. Migration into towns and cities is growing faster with each day, month and year. Very shortly we shall have over ninety percent of the population living in towns and cities; with no societies.

Aristotle would have a different philosophical term to describe man today: "Man the animal".

## MANAGEMENT

“Management in all business and organizational activities is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively”.

For the present discussion I will limit management to management of industries and factories employing hundreds of employees.

There are volumes written on strategies, organizational set ups, rules of procedure and of late Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). These tell you of incentives, benefits, motivational methods, et al to motivate the people who will together accomplish the desired goals and objectives. But very little is written on the humane side, from the psychological and philosophical point of view, on the motivation of the people.

Firstly management depends on the character of the manager. If he is a person full of pride (a high or inordinate opinion of one's own dignity, importance, merit, superiority, whether cherished in mind or displayed in bearing, conduct and action) then I suggest he discontinue reading. The essential character of the manager must be humility and sincerity.

One common mis-conception is that management is about maneuvering people. Employees soon see through the maneuvering of the boss and they do not appreciate that.

The manager must understand and appreciate what are the most important things that people cherish; the basics being:

1. His dignity
2. His name
3. His skill

In each and every interaction the manager must bear the above in mind. He will do well to bear in mind that his relationship with the worker(s) is that between an employer and an employee where both agreed that the employee will work for the employer and in return the employer will make a payment commensurate with the type and duration of work. Other than terminating the employment the manager has no more legal authority; in the eye of the law and in society you are both persons.

The employee is primarily motivated if the employer treats him with dignity, addresses him by his name and appreciates his skills. Courtesy costs nothing.

The manager must remember that the management and the employees are all together to attain the objective of the company; that it is the employees who achieve the production and management is there just to facilitate the employee in his work to achieve the goal. The employee feels satisfied if they see that the management and every other employee are working sincerely towards achieving the goal. Now here comes the 'catch point', is the management qualified to design and put a system in place where each and every employee knows what his job is and remains fully engaged. If one worker out of (say) one hundred remains idle then the work atmosphere is sure to collapse.

It is essential that the workers are convinced they are working for the benefit of themselves and for their colleagues and not for the employer's benefit alone. This fosters team harmony and, more importantly, team responsibility in the workers. Errant workers will be self-



disciplined by his colleagues. To achieve this, the manager must ensure that they are appropriately remunerated commensurate with the company's profits.

The manager (owner) must have one essential quality: he must trust his immediate subordinates through whom he manages the organization. If there is lack of trust then there will surely be back-biting amongst the subordinates that will invariably filter down the ranks.

Immediately following the Second World War Taiwan was unable to even feed the population. Children of that time did not have the luxury of going to schools, colleges and universities; but all learnt their mother language (today you will find most Taiwanese of in their sixties can hardly understand, leave alone speak, English). Their first opportunity came by way of garments exports to USA and Europe. From that day Taiwan has not looked back. Today Taiwan ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in Foreign Exchange Reserves and 19<sup>th</sup> in GDP per capita at US\$ 37,720 (Bangladesh ranked 155<sup>th</sup> at US\$ 1,693). How did they manage to achieve this in barely fifty years? They did not go to management schools or universities; leave alone Stanford or Harvard. It is DIGNITY of the people. The owners and management treated their employees with dignity. If you visit Taiwan you will not see the rich strutting like peacocks that we see every day in Bangladesh. Every person, rich and poor has his own dignity and you ignore this at your own peril.

Bangladesh got this opportunity some twenty five years back but the opportunity was squandered. In Bangladesh there is no concept of an "employer" and an "employee" relationship; it is "master" and "servant" relationship. The owners have engaged ex-army officers to command the factories; but the army is an institution quite different from factories.

## MAN-MADE PERPETUAL POVERTY IN BANGLADESH

First let us have a look what the statistics say.

### LAND FOR AGRICULTURE

- Population: 160 millions
- Total area : 143,998 square kilometers
- Land mass : 90.4 % = 130,174 sq. km.
- Water mass : 9.6% = 13,824 sq. km.
- Forest area : 6.7% of land mass = 8,722 sq. km.
- Agricultural area : 69.5% of land mass = 90,471 sq. km
- Arable area : 88.1% of agricultural area = 79,705 sq. km.
- Rice production: 25 million tons (@ 6 tons per hectare)

Assumption:

- Farming families: 20 million (60% of population and 5 members per family)

That will calculate one farming family, at an average, owning 0.40 hectares and, at the rate of 6 tons per hectare, the family produces 2400 kilograms per annum. To keep the price down the government buys from farmers at Tk. 25 per kilogram. That means to family's earnings per annum is Tk.60,000 per annum. Now deduct the expenses for seeds, electricity, fertilizer, insecticides, feeds for the cows, etc., the family has hardly Tk30,000 per annum. This is far below the average earnings of the wage earners and laborers. Unless a miracle occurs the poor farmer is condemned to perpetual poverty.

Now consider the banquets in parties, parties for guests and friends and the rich food the rich enjoy from the rice the poor farmer has produced. If this is not class oppression then the sun rises from the west.

Now, why should this situation be allowed to continue or, are we like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand.

Something has to be done to take these poor farmers out of their poverty. Hordes of them flock to the towns and cities only to become a degraded class of people; inferior human beings. He sweats driving a rickshaw; he is nameless and inhuman. People who wish to hire for a ride do not address him as to a person, not even a rickshaw puller, he is called "OIHKHAALI". Would any person with dignity do this? NO. But where is dignity in Bangladesh! It is oft and interred with the bones of our forefathers.

Industrialization and hospitality business is definitely not the answer. Without energy and raw materials resources there can be only so many industries and businesses.

Is the country's planners, economists and financial experts cannot find a solution then they are better of taking a long leave from the country or, is it that they never looked at the statistics and facts? Then they have been grossly negligent and owe an apology to the poor farmers and to the country.

Yet we celebrate independence day and burst with pride (actually it is ego) in talking about the sovereignty of the country. Whose country and whose sovereignty are they celebrating and shouting! Definitely not the poor farmer the country has condemned to perpetual poverty. We shake with anger and call the speaker a racist when told that Bengali's lack dignity. Well are those farmers not Bengalis?

## MICRO-CREDIT – WILL IT ERADICATE POVERTY

I have come across debates and arguments as to whether it is good and, if so, will it eradicate poverty; or whether it is bad and, if so, whether it hurts the borrowers.

By microcredit I understand the poorest of the poor are able to borrow modest amounts without collateral. I'll stand corrected if someone gives me understanding otherwise.

I am not an economist but, having graduated in mechanical engineering from EPUET (now BUET) and having been in business for many years, I can lay claim to some knowledge in economics and finance. I tend to look at problems in a macro sense first before indulging in micro issues.

Bangladesh today has a population of about 160 million (not accurate figure). Considering six members per family on an average, there would then be 26 million (figure rounded off) families. We know that ten percent of the families are very rich and about twenty percent poorest of the poor. That means 2.6 million families are very rich and 5.2 million extremely poor.

Option 1: Consider that each of the 2.6 million do not hesitate to loan the very poorest any sum around Bangladesh taka fifteen to twenty thousand at a very nominal interest rate (say five percent); provided the government guarantees repayment. By this way each of the poorest family's will be receiving Bangladesh taka 8,750 at an interest of 5%.

Option 2: The government could do this by itself. It can simply print the required amount of around Bangladesh taka 45.50 billion (US\$ 550 million; which is approximately 0.5% of the GDP) and give it to the poorest of the poor interest free. The Bangladesh bank may not like this move arguing that inflation will rise, but I should think it would be morally correct.

Will this then lift the poorest of the poor from their poverty zone? If, by taking a similar amount of loan from an NGO at the interest rate of 32-35%, it does lift the poorest of the poor from poverty, then both options would do much better; option 2 being better than option 1.

I believe that every economist knows that there must be conditions existing whereby the taka 8,750 can be made to generate more income. The conditions we are hearing are:

1. Buy two or three cows and their milk will give the requisite income.
2. Raise chicken and the income will multiply as the numbers multiply.
3. Buy sewing machines and earnings will come.
4. Use the money to produce food items for sale.
5. Etc.

Each one of the above has its limitations.

1. Cows need grazing fields or collected hay and nutrients.
2. Chickens are vulnerable to bird's flu.
3. If every family has a sewing machine there will be no market.
4. The profit margin may not be enough.

Remember, we are not only talking about the taka 8,750 earning an income; this earning must be sufficient to feed and clothe the family and then leave a surplus. Poorest people are often vulnerable to diseases. Consider one member of the family becoming very ill, needing to see the doctor and pay for the medicine. Can that family resist from spending the borrowed money to pay for the doctor and medicines?

I recall watching on the BBC program on microcredit in Africa where the family was castigated by the NGO staff for spending to treat the family's very sick daughter. Even the KABULIWALH would blush.

My own experience relates to my friend (actually he is a friend I cannot make myself call him a cook; so I'll call him Barua). He has been in my family since 1956. When I started living on my own he has been with me. A modest and most humble of persons I know.

Many years ago, unknown to me, his wife in the village borrowed Tk. 5 thousand from Grameen Bank. She bought two cows with the money. After some years the cows died from a disease. Then she fell behind in her repayments to Grameen bank. Then she started to sell of household items and then whatever little jewelry she owned. Barua knew about this but never had the heart to tell me; he would not take a penny without earning it. Substantial part of whatever salary I paid to him went to repayments. This went on over many years. Then finally he had nothing more to sell and make the salary he got was not enough and that is when he told me. He was having to sell his house now. It transpired that he had paid the Grameen Bank more than Tk. 25,000 and still owed Tk 15,000. I paid that money and his house; his repentance for such a foolish action hurts me in the heart.

I have never had anything to do with Grameen Bank so I do not know a thing about their operations. I should think it was morally obligation on their part to warn borrowers and educate them on the many pitfalls. These are highly educated people with economics and financial wizardry at their finger tips; they must have known about these pitfalls. They should also must have known that a few thousands of taka is not the answer.

The primary requirement is opportunity of activities that generate sustained incomes.

## MY ANGST

Non- interference in other countries' affairs applies to all but America. The world is her affair and she has the right to defend her interests anywhere and any part of the world!

When China reaches out to foreign countries like in Africa, Middle-east & Latin America they are robbing these countries of natural resources. But when America does so, it is liberating those countries.

When the whites went around Africa, India and Australia shooting and killing tigers, lions, Rhinos, elephants, wolves, etc. etc. that was sport. When natives kill them for food or money to survive it is cruelty to animals.

When the western countries install surveillance equipment in every nook and corner of their land and monitor every body's telephone call, emails, letters, etc. etc. that is protecting the citizens. When China does one-tenth of such surveillance it is spying on private lives and violation of liberty.

Corruption by individuals, companies or officials in China is the fault of the single-party system. The same in western countries is the fault of those individuals, companies and officials.

The borders of the countries in Europe have been shaped by hundreds of years of wars and strife. A remnant still remains in Ireland between the catholic and protestant Christians. Such wars and strife are understandable to them (recall Narcissus). These western countries, at the end of their colonization era, divided Africa into countries on the basis of latitudes and longitudes (irrespective of difference in races, tribes, etc. etc.) and cannot understand why they cannot live along peacefully with between them. They are, after all, all blacks.

When nuclear power is in the hands of Iran or North Korea it is in the WRONG hands. Which are the RIGHT hands? Israel, having nuclear arms, is now threatening to attack Iran; would it do so if Iran was nuclear armed? Bottom line; which country has dropped the atom bomb, killing and maiming hundreds of thousands of innocent lives (men, women & children) and still suffering from after effects?

Climate was never an issue till the western countries started to loose out on international trade to China, India, South Korea, Brazil, etc. These latter countries have to burn fossil fuel to drive their industries. So comes the climate warming issue. China and India must not be allowed to release so much carbon to the atmosphere. So why not impose quotas for each country; but with an option to buy the quotas from smaller developing countries. What cheek!

When thousands upon thousands of people died, and are still dying, in Africa from starvation caused by crop failures because of the drought the western conscience is not aroused. Few civilians are killed in civil conflicts (Libya, Syria and others before) the western conscience is aroused. When Myanmar refused to accept foreign aid after Nargis some western countries even threatened to take the Myanmar government to the international court for violation of human rights.

In colonial times the western people went around their colonies teaching western manners. You do not "TELL" somebody; you say "IF I WERE YOU". Now the moment you switch on the TV some western politician or official is "TELLING" other countries what is right and what is wrong, what they can do or what they cannot do, etc., etc. Then there is the beautiful face

of Hillary Clinton with sweet and articulate voicetelling anybody and everybody what to do and what not to do.

US companies oblige their local agents to sign a document titled "Ethical Practices". By this the agent is forbidden to gift even a pen to the customer; it would be seen as a bribe. American government lobbies with other countries for big businesses (aircraft, arms, etc) by carrot and stick policy; when presidential candidates fills its coffers with money donated by the rich and mighty (individuals, corporations, interest groups). If this is not bribe then the crows are white.

## MY EARTH

Whilst browsing the internet I came upon an article titled “LARRAKIA CULTURE” written by Raylene Singh who is the senior Larrakia Elder. Larrakia are the traditional Aboriginal people of Darwin, Australia.

He wrote “I am strong in my culture – the way I was taught by my mother and by my father and my grandfather and grandmother. We Traditional Owners know this land and know how to look after it and we know what our Country wants; and everything that lives here – our people, the fish, the birds, the animals, insects, plants and landscape have to be looked after”.

To the traditional Aboriginal people the land gave everything they needed and they respected (worshipped) the land they cared and looked after it.

The earth gives us everything that we need but do we care look after it? On the contrary, we are exploiting every conceivable resources of the earth with gay abandonment. Vast tracts of forest have disappeared, rivers, lakes and other water bodies are dead (filled with toxics), landscapes have been mutilated by digging for coal and minerals, etc., etc..

Traditional wisdom and values have been abandoned and replaced by knowledge in sciences, technology, economy, financial wizardry, business, etc., etc. There is no question that knowledge is the engine that drives our civilizations. But, like engines need to be controlled by proven control systems, knowledge has to be tempered by wisdom.

Today we live under the ever present threat of climate warming; a situation whereby the entire face of the earth will likely be changed forever. Can we, in Bangladesh, dare to imagine a drought, as is occurring in parts of Africa, to occur in our country. Can we conceive of the consequences? The land would dry up and crop production drastically decreased (up to what extent is anybody's guess), rivers would dry up. We must bear in mind that we are a population of over 180 million people living off 55,000 sq. miles only! What would be the cost of importing food on so large a scale.

We claim today to be a modern civilized world. But are we really civilized? How can civilized peoples kill “The Goose That Lays The Golden Eggs”!

## OF BEING NOT FAIR AND HONEST AND THE PRICE YOU PAY FOR IT

I drive a Honda Accord, a car for the rich.

Each time I sit in the car I silently ask forgiveness of my fellow countrymen; this is only for business purpose. Is there logic in my humility? No. I am as guilty as others who drive expensive cars; every person has a reason.

So I speak here as a confessed hypocrite.

Rich people live in Dhaka live in Dhanmondi Residential Area, Banani Residential Area, Gulshan Residential Area, Baridhara Residential Area (initially meant for foreign missions), Uttara Town and other lesser housing estates. In these areas in most cases couples, only two parents because the children are all abroad, are living in over two thousand five hundred square feet apartments. They usually have two seating rooms furnished with expensive imported furniture, but all covered for there is no one to seat in them. The whole house is centrally air-conditioned; centrally for two persons! Oh yes! I forget; three or four bedrooms with attached bathrooms all furnished with imported fittings.

Ever think of a mid-income family who has to share a one thousand to one thousand square feet house with two or three children with two bathrooms?

Ever think of those, in the lower middle income group, who share a one thousand square feet apartment with two or three children with one bathroom?

Forget the poor workers who live in one-two room apartments sharing between a dozen one bathroom?

People living in shanties? Forget them. They deserve it.

Street children? They should never be there in the first place!

Rich people decry the corruption in our society forgetting that the same corruption mad them rich.

How many Bengalis were rich in 1971; these can be counted on the finger-tips: the land holders and some traditional tradesmen (not industrialists).

So it is those that were at the bottom of the wealth ladder in 1971 who are your parliamentarians. Every rich person decries the low level of our politicians. What have you done to avoid this situation? Every educated person is a fan of multi-part democracy and blame the politicians. Why do you think you deserve better.

Remember the old adage: the people get what they deserve. The whole country is getting what it deserves.

I can only say that one deserves what he gives to others.



## PARADOX OF AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDY

Subsidy paid to agriculture keeps the prices within reach of poor people; so it is good!

RIGHT?

WRONG!

Let us analyze the effects of agricultural subsidy for from keeping food prices down.

Every country practices giving subsidy to agriculture. Whist poor countries can come up with meager amounts the richer nations pays astronomical amounts.

Euro-Zone: Up to Euro 57 billion total with Euro 39 billion as direct subsidy per annum.  
USA: Up to US\$ 20 billion as direct subsidy per annum.

The GDP of Euro-zone and USA are US\$ 16.22 trillion and US\$ 15.72 trillion respectively. So the subsidies in terms of percentage of GDP are:

Euro-zone:  
USA:

The world's total food production is estimated at US\$ 1 trillion. So the subsidies in terms of percentage of world's food production are;

Euro-zone: 7.5  
USA: 2.1

Euro-zone and USA exports are US\$ 175 billion and US\$ 44 billion. So in terms of percentage of the subsidies to exports are:

Euro-zone:  
USA:

Now let us see how these subsidized low prices are affecting the economies of developing, Bangladesh included, of the world.

These countries are obliged to keep their production prices as best as possible or else their countries would be flooded by food imported from Euro-zone and USA. Here I will restrict myself to the effect on Bangladesh.

The subsidy given to agriculture by way of subsidized prices of electricity and fertilizer is no where near the subsidy received by farmers in Euro-zone and USA as a percentage of their production cost. The meager profit the farmers make of their hard labour is barely enough to feed and clothe them; keeping them in perpetual poverty and vulnerable to loan sharks.

I do not have the figures but I would presume that the export prices of food by euro-zone and USA would be twice the present prices. If any reader has an accurate figure then I will stand corrected. In that event our farmers could be able to sell at twice the present prices . Even without the subsidy from the government the farmers would be able to earn a fair profit and gradually lift themselves from perpetual poverty.

Now the government in power will ask: how can poor people afford to buy food? One should bear in mind that 65% of our population live in rural areas and earn their living from agriculture and up to 25% can be categorized in the middle-income and rich group. That leaves 10% of the population who would not be able to buy food at today's wage levels. This can be rectified by increasing the wage levels to appropriate levels. That would require the Bangladesh Bank to print more money and put into circulation in the country. That, of course, will mean devaluation of Taka against other currencies but that would be a boost to our exports.

The crying need of the day is for the rich nations, particularly Euro-zone and USA to stop subsidizing agriculture. This ought to be a top priority in our foreign affairs.

An ordinary labour rate in USA is US\$ 8 per hour. For the same job the rate is Tk 40 (US\$ 0.50)! Where lies the fault; we should analyze and correct it.

## PERPETUAL POVERTY IN BANGLADESH

First let us have a look what the statistics say.

### LAND FOR AGRICULTURE

- Population: 160 millions
- Total area : 143,998 square kilometers
- Land mass : 90.4 % = 130,174 sq. km.
- Water mass : 9.6% = 13,824 sq. km.
- Forest area : 6.7% of land mass = 8,722 sq. km.
- Agricultural area : 69.5% of land mass = 90,471 sq. km
- Arable area : 88.1% of agricultural area = 79,705 sq. km.
- Rice production: 25 million tons (@ 6 tons per hectare)

Assumption:

- Farming families: 20 million (60% of population and 5 members per family)

That will calculate one farming family, at an average, owning 0.40 hectares and, at the rate of 6 tons per hectare, the family produces 2400 kilograms per annum. To keep the price down the government buys from farmers at Tk. 25 per kilogram. That means to family's earnings per annum is Tk.60,000 per annum. Now deduct the expenses for seeds, electricity, fertilizer, insecticides, feeds for the cows, etc., the family has hardly Tk30,000 per annum. This is far below the average earnings of the wage earners and laborers. Unless a miracle occurs the poor farmer is condemned to perpetual poverty.

Now consider the banquets in parties, parties for guests and friends and the rich food the rich enjoy from the rice the poor farmer has produced. If this is not class oppression then the sun rises from the west.

Now, why should this situation be allowed to continue or, are we like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand.

Something has to be done to take these poor farmers out of their poverty. Hordes of them flock to the towns and cities only to become a degraded class of people; inferior human beings. He sweats driving a rickshaw; he is nameless and inhuman. People who wish to hire for a ride do not address him as to a person, not even a rickshaw puller, he is called "OIHKHAALI". Would any person with dignity do this? NO. But where is dignity in Bangladesh! It is oft and interred with the bones of our forefathers.

Industrialization and hospitality business is definitely not the answer. Without energy and raw materials resources there can be only so many industries and businesses.

Is the country's planners, economists and financial experts cannot find a solution then they are better of taking a long leave from the country or, is it that they never looked at the statistics and facts? Then they have been grossly negligent and owe an apology to the poor farmers and to the country.

Yet we celebrate independence day and burst with pride (actually it is ego) in talking about the sovereignty of the country. Whose country and whose sovereignty are they celebrating and shouting! Definitely not the poor farmer the country has condemned to perpetual poverty. We shake with anger and call the speaker a racist when told that Bengali's lack dignity. Well are those farmers not Bengalis?

## ANIMA – AN ALTERNATIVE PATH

Anima is a dark complexioned girl born to poor family who lives off the little piece of land that the land. Father, when he is not working on the land, works as a labourer.

- Scene 1: Anima is suckling from her mother.
- Scene 2: Anima is toddling; her eyes sparkling with innocence.
- Scene 3: Anima, now two years old, is in market with father. She sees grown men and children taking sweets from vendors, so reaches out with her tiny hands to grab a handful but is immediately stopped by father. She tries again at the next stall and the vendor hits her hand with a stick. Her father reacts immediately and starts a quarrel with the vendor. Finally after much shouting from both men the vendor hands one sweet.
- Scene 4: Anima is now five. She sees children of her age playing in the neighboring house belonging to a rich neighbour. She is immediately scolded and chased out but she does not leave without them a piece of her mouth. She then sees some children ill dressed as herself playing in the field. she plays with them.
- Scene 5: Anima is now six. The rich neighbour with two people come to the house, pulls her father out of the house. They first scold her father, shouting that his cow had broken their fence and eaten much of their family vegetable garden. They then beat up her father' but her father fights back. He is bruied and indignant but not cowed.
- Scene 6: Anima is now seven. She is in the village market with her father. She accidentally bumps into a man drops the pitcher of curd he is carrying. The man, sternly looking, slaps her on her cheek. When her father protests, he hits her father but her father fights back. Bystanders separate them.
- another time the wife of the rich neighbour comes and scolds and beats her mother saying that her chicken had broken a pitcher in their house. Anima's mother fights back. When the other woman leaves she goes up to the gate of their fence and shouts abuses. Anima watches in anger; her spirits burning.
- Scene 7: Anima is now eight. Anima observes little girls like herself all dressed alike, going to school. Anima wonders what school is; she would rather play with her friends. Whe often gets into fights with boys. She is no coward nor loser.
- Scene 8: Anima is now ten. She is working in the house because her mother had gone to work as a help at a rich neighbour's house. She is sweating and wiping her brows. She is struggling with the fire and the smoke.
- Scene 9: Anima is now fourteen and is getting married to a man of twenty four from the next village. He looks rather weak and fragile.
- Scene 10: Anima and her husband are in their new house, built from mud and roofed with hay. They even have a small compound in front and at the back. They

- are happy. Husband works as a farm hand to a rich landlord of the next village. Amina struggles with the household chores.
- Scene 11: After some months anima finds that her husband is good for nothing. He drinks, now and then, and comes home drunk. He can't provide enough for them to eat. They often quarrel with anima dominating.
- Scene 12:** Anima is sixteen. Anima has had enough of her husband and throws him out of the house. The husband, after lingering for sometime in the village trying to get back the house, leaves for the city.
- Scene 13: often village youths are seen entering anima's house in the evenings. Anima seems to be doing financially well enough to feed and buy clothes.
- Scene 14: Anima is seventeen. A son is born to her. She tells to every one of her nightly visitors that he is the father of the boy and threatens to dump the child in his house if he does not care for the child. The nightly visitors are embarrassed and cowed and give anima what she asks. Anima eats and wares well.
- Scene 15: Anima is twenty two. By now she has given birth to four healthy sons. They are growing up fast and she has her nightly visitors giving her more.
- Scene 16: Anima is thirty. Her sons are growing up fast. The eldest is now thirteen and the youngest nine. Anima encourages them to steal. The boys are self-confident and do their job well.
- Scene 17: Anima is thirty two. Her eldest son has been arrested by the police and is in police custody. Anima has her nightly visitors to speak to the O/C of the thana but to no avail.  
Anima herself goes and meets the second officer and the oc. Strangely enough the boy is released. There is gossip in the village that Amina slept with the O/C. This is being borne out by the O/C visiting anima's house on more than one occasion. Anima is a formidable person now in the village. Her nightly visitors start to decrease and cease altogether. Her sons provide for the family by hook or by crook.
- Scene 18: Anima is forty eight. Her sons are now grown men. They have stayed together and gathered many young vagabonds like themselves. The eldest becomes the leader of the gang. They resort to extortion and bullying.
- Scene 19: Anima is fifty five. She observes that the powerful man of their village has enmity with the powerful man of the neighbouring village. She pays a visit to this powerful man of the neighbouring village and pledges her support in his quarrel with the other powerful man. Anima's sons are now supporters and confidants of the powerful man of the neighbouring village. In the next two years this powerful man defeats the powerful man of Anima's village. The powerful man of the neighbouring village gives credit to anima's son and her. Now she is the most powerful person in her village.
- Scene 20: Anima is sixty. Her sons had already torn down their mud hut and built a concrete house in its stead. Two of the elder boys are married and have a son and a daughter each. Anima, now dressed like a lady, is cuddling her grandchildren. She is happy and thanks God.

## POLITICS IN BANGLADESH

One of my friends suggested that I write on the political situation in Bangladesh; stating “WE NEED TO CHANGE THE CONFRONTATIONAL POLITICAL CULTURE”.

I will try, in my limited capacity, to make a humble attempt to answer my friend.

The French political thinker and historian, best known for his book “Democracy in America”, noted that “people get the Government they deserve”. I am in full agreement to this and the basis of my writing will be formulated by this adage. To those that do not agree with this adage I suggest to discontinue reading this article.

So let us take a look at the people of Bangladesh. I will not be very wrong if I say that 85% of the population is Muslims, 10% Hindus and balance 5% Christians, Buddhists and Animists.

Remnants of a civilization in Bengal date back 4000 years (to 2000BC) when the region was settled by Dravidians and Austro-Asiatic people. Very little about them is known.

The Aryans came from the west to this region 700BC through the invasions by the Maghada kingdom. This was followed by the Maurya and Gupta dynasties till 750AD. These were Aryans who brought with them their Hindu religion. During this period, the original people of Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic stock were massacred in countless numbers. But it is probable they could not terminate them totally, simply because of their numbers of the original people, like they did to the Dravidians in the Indus-Valley region from 1500BC to 700BC. The original people were degraded to the lowest social status. In 750AD the Palas of Bengal, who were from the original stock, overthrew the Hindu rulers and ruled the region till 1174. During this period the people of the original stock embraced Buddhism. The remains in Paharpur and Mainamati bears evidence to the Buddhist civilization during this period. The Palas were overthrown by the Senas in 1174 who built up the Hindu Sena dynasty. The Senas were Brahma-Kshatriyas and being fanatical Hindus oppressed the Buddhist population and degraded them again to the bottom end of the social structure. The Senas were overthrown by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1203. Bakhtiyar Khilji was a slave-turned military general of Turkic origin. It was not till 1260 that Turk & Afghan rulers of Northern India established a Muslim rule in Bengal. The Mughals ruled from 1576 to 1717 followed by the Nawabs of Turkic origin from 1717 to 1765 when the British conquered Bengal.

A glimpse into the anthropology suggests that racial mixing between the conquering Aryans from 700BC till 750AD, when the region was ruled by Aryan Hindus. The fact that before and after partition of India the Muslim population was far higher than the Hindu population it would suggest that around 750AD the Buddhist population in the region would also must have been much higher than the Aryans; for it is this population that formed the majority of the Muslims at the time of partition. There would have been mix with the Aryan Muslims during the period from 1260 to 1765 but that would be in a limited scale; geography would have been a limiting factor.

I will leave it up to the reader to figure out for himself what the Bengali stock is; is it Dravidian stock with Aryan mix or is it Aryan stock with Dravidian mix.

Whatever be the case the period from 700BC till 1971, when the region was ruled by foreigners (accepting the Pala rule 750AD to 1174AD) the people were always oppressed. This oppression would explain the higher primitive intelligence and cunningness of the Bengali people; these traits were needed to survive centuries of oppression.

It is this primitive intelligence and cunningness then that we have to consider in our answer for a good politics in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries with the least literacy rate (135<sup>th</sup>) in the world. Yet you go and talk to the factory worker, the farm worker, the rickshaw puller, the automobile drivers, labourers, et el, you will find they have an opinion on politics. Without any knowledge in the affairs of running a government they still have opinions. Some would even bravo them for their interest and participation. Take a closer look; the opinions are divided into two camps. All they are doing is making alliances for their own survival and profit; the same that they had to do over the thousands of years before. Everyone wants a piece of the cake; some for survival and others for enrichment.

Now let us come to the system of government that we have; it is called multi-party democracy. In an earlier article I have shown that Democracy in its true spirit is practicable only for a small egalitarian community where everybody knows everybody else and all take part in deciding the affairs of the community. What we have today is only an approximation to Democracy (I would refer you to my article “Approximation to Democracy”) and a lot of the spirit and substance in the approximation. Anyway I will use the term “Democracy” in the conventional sense. The multi-party democracy connotes that the voters get a choice between ideologies; prior to the break-down of USSR the choice was between socialism and capitalism. Since the collapse of USSR it is generally believed to be true that socialism is no longer a viable option. So we are all voting for the same system but to different sets of people. What are the credentials that these people who wish to govern make known to the people; very simply put CHEAP POPULARITY.

Elections are won or lost to by the 300 members who are selected to represent a certain party; or through alliances of parties. On the other hand the majority of the voters are already looking for alliances with more powerful elements of the society who can manage for them a share of the loot of country if he is elected. Neither of the opposing parties has any compulsion to be civil to each other; for it might be interpreted by the voters allied to any particular party as a sign of weakness.

The root of the problem here is that members elected to the parliament are able to payback in cash and kind to those voters who aligned to him. He is given executive and such other powers by his government that he literally rules his constituency. THIS MUST BE STOPPED.

The system should not give the parliament member any authority, executive or otherwise, to interfere with the administration of his constituency.

According to Bangladesh constitution a parliament member is required to perform the following functions:

1. Enactment of Legislation
2. Consent to Taxation and Control of Public Expenditure
3. Ensuring Accountability of the Government.

Just as an academic interest we may compare the above with those written in the Indian constitution:

1. Controlling the Executive
2. Law Making
3. Controlling the Finance

4. Raising Deliberations
5. Constituent Functions
6. Electoral Functions
7. Judicial Functions

It goes without saying a member of the parliament has to be fully conversant in law, finance and management to discharge his functions. Now tell me how many of the parliament members in Bangladesh actually qualify to discharge the functions he is elected for.

So what is left of the ideal democracy we are approximating in our present democracy; its import and spirit? Nothing is left but the word “representation”. What we have is simple “Mob Rule”.

So I must disappoint my friend.

Confrontational politics is embedded into the multi-party democracy.

If my friend is interested I might explore if this is possible in a single-party system.



## SUBSIDY, BANK LOAN & INSURANCE TO FARMERS

Government is providing power and fertilizer farmers at a managed low price. This means government is subsidizing the farmers; right? WRONG. The subsidy enables the farmers to grow at a lesser cost than if the price of power and fertilizer had been at the national levels. But this subsidy is passed on to the consumers who are the real benefactors. So if you grudge against these subsidized prices of power and fertilizer to farmers, think again. The cost of the food on your table would have been otherwise higher.

Banks are freely financing industries. Banks provide loans up to seventy percent of the project cost against the land, building and machinery being pledged to the bank as collateral. For farmers who own land and till their own land the bank can provide loan against the land as collateral. For farmers who till others' land on share-cropping the crops can be pledged to the bank as collateral. Whilst industrial loans are on long term basis these farmers loans can be on seasonal term basis. This will free the farmers from taking loans from loan sharks, or from businesses that provide loan on crops being pledged at low prices. This will cut out many middlemen and the consumer will get a fair price.

Crop production is vulnerable to nature. Draught or floods may affect the output; so also pests and other natural causes. The prime need of the hour is for the government to provide insurance to the farmers. Needless to say, this involves a huge amount of data to be gathered and stored in servers. However, today's IT can be employed at low costs and manageable man-power.

Bear in mind that our farmers produce around 25 million tons of rice; apart from other crops and vegetables. If Bangladesh had to import all this rice the cost would be around US\$ 13 billion!

## Mr. TONY & Mr. BACTERIA

### MR. TONY OF CHAUNATI

Take the village “Tony”. He has no land, no business but still he maintains a family, a house and is financially fairly well off. Now, how is it possible for a person with no visible means of earning to show the income that he earns?

Our Tony uses his primitive intelligence (intuition) and cunningness. His strategy is to explore possibilities of making some money where no person of any other race would find. He discovers that two brothers, who owned substantial high acreage of land and were financially strong, were having a quarrel over a piece of land over inheritance. Our Tony goes to the area and listens to the village gossip in the village tea stall. He takes note of the people who spoke knowingly about the affair and approaches them for more inside knowledge of the brothers and their quarrel. “Here is an opportunity” he murmurs to himself. Next he goes to the houses of the quarrelling brothers and makes small talk with the inmates. He assesses which of the brothers is stronger or had a better chance of winning the contest for the piece of land. Having made his assessment he goes to brother A, who our Tony will lose, and try to befriend him. From past experience he had acquired some knowledge of the land administration and laws; this he uses to entice brother A to speak ill of brother B threatening to go to the court. Next our Tony goes to brother B who, according to our Tony’s assessment, is likely to win, and denounces brother A for quarrelling with brother B and confides in brother B that brother A is thinking of going to the court. Over the coming days our Tony has already befriended brother B and gained his confidence. He gradually entices brother B to go to the court, swearing that he will give evidence in brother B’s favour. Next he calls on some poor neighbors and tells that they could earn some money by simply giving evidence in the court. He then takes these people to brother B and makes them swear that they will give evidence as told. There is, of course, a little thing about paying these people and also our Tony who has devoted all his time these few days (or weeks). Brother B gladly parts with some money (not large) and thanks our Tony. Now the contract between brother B and our Tony is sealed.

Brother B sues brother A in the court in a civil case. So the case gets started and keeps on going on, and on. All this while our Tony is at the side of brother B’ assisting him in any possible way and also, due to his knowledge of court cases, advises him. Brother B is only too happy to part with money as and when asked for by Tony. The case goes on for years – judgements, appeals, adjournments, hearing postponements, et al- until the brothers run dry of their funds. All the while our Tony has been milking money from brother B and has made a handsome amount.

When the case finally comes to a close the two brothers are totally broke, having spent all the money and even selling their land to run the case. The piece of land is no solace to either brother.

But our Tony, by simply applying intuition and cunningness, has made his earnings and starts looking for the next victim or opportunity.

### MR. BACTERIA OF TEKNAF

Choudhury came from a family who owned lots of land. He can recollect up to four generations before him when the family owned tens of thousands of acres. The land was administered by the descendents through the eldest son directly descending in the family tree. So the other members of the family did not have to work to earn a living. At the end of

every harvest season they received their share of the crop in kind or in cash. This continued for three generations. During this period most of the family embers left after selling their share of the land. By the time Choudhury was 34 or 35 only few families, out of the family tree, remained and the person administering the land decided that each family should run his own land. Now, Choudhury had never learnt to earn a living and actually did not know the value of money. He did not know where his lands were; as they were scattered. He had never been to the land office and never looked at the mouza map. He managed to locate some portions of his land and started to sell them. By the time he was 45 Choudhury had sold off all of the land that he knew of. As was customary from his forefathers' time Choudhury must have his share of do-chuani (wine).

Our Bacteria lived in a village near which Choudhury owned some land being tilled by his proza. Our Bacteria is poor and illiterate and has no land with very little money. He worked as a labourer. Bacteria goes to meet Choudhury when the latter was drunk. Bacteria carries Choudhury to his house and leaves him there. Next morning Bacteria is in Choudhury's house enquiring about his health. Bacteria does not leave the house but, instead, starts cleaning some parts of the uncared-for area. Choudhury, never having known wanting before, offers lunch to Bacteria. In the evening Bacteria accompanies Choudhury to the latter's drinking place and, like the evening before, carries Choudhury back to his house. This continues for over a week when Bacteria returns to his own house. He manages to borrow some money and comes back to Choudhury after a lapse of two weeks. Now he tells Choudhury, with surprise written all over his face that he lived in the village where Choudhury owned so much land. He insists on honouring Choudhury by buying a chicken for his meal. Like before he accompanied Choudhury to the drinking place and carries him back to house. This goes on for about a week when our Bacteria returns to his village only to return after about a week. This time he is very indignant and, with indignation written all over his face, informs that Choudhury's prozza has been cheating Choudhury for years. And 'the cheek of it' was talking ill of Choudhury in the village; that Choudhury was a drunk and good for nothing. It was only for deference to Choudhury the Bacteria tells that he did not beat up the prozza. So comes the next sowing season and Bacteria had managed to till Choudhury's land. Bacteria gives Choudhury a handsome share of the crop. After harvest Bacteria was constantly beside Choudhury, meeting every need of Choudhury. Now Choudhury's finances began to falter and he is unable to pay for his drinks. Bacteria steps in saying "Sir, your forefathers were our rulers and we your slaves; how can I, a humble slave, stand that you cannot drink for money?" Bacteria manages some money to pay for Choudhury's drinks. This continues; Bacteria sometimes having to borrow from others. The next season Bacteria tills Choudhury's land again and after harvest stays beside Choudhury, often footing the drink bills. The at a certain stage he tells Choudhury that he needed a receipt from Choudhury for all the amount he had footed for drinks, because he has to show to his wife that it was spent for a good cause. Choudhury readily signs an inflated bill. This goes on for about ten years.

One day Bacteria confronts Choudhury with the receipts and asks for payment; by this time the amount had become quite high. Choudhury does not have that kind of money so Bacteria suggests the land. Now Bacteria is really indignant and threatens Choudhury that he will have to go to the thana. Choudhury's family had never, ever, been to the thana as a defendant. Now Choudhury wakes up and realizes the situation; but he is handicapped. He is scared to death about the shame when everyone will come to know of the tale. He readily signs off his land at a throw away price.

Bacteria never, ever, visited Choudhury after that.

THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TONY'S AND BACTERIAS.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIUM OF TEACHING IN MOTHER TONGUE

Language development is crucial for intellectual development. Language plays a vital part in the development of the brain, and thereby, mental faculties. Language is by which we recognize different compositions of our thoughts. Language is the vehicle by which thoughts can be recognized and expressed. “By interacting with its environment, a child develops the ability to develop private inner speech. Inner speech is thinking in pure meanings; it is the link between the secondary signal system of the social world and the thought of the individual. Through the development of inner speech, children straddle the divide between thought and language, eventually being able to express their thoughts coherently to others”; Barry J. Zimmerman & Dale H. Schunk.

Think of the brain (mind) as the biggest library where your library card is language.

Interaction between mental faculties and language starts at the prenatal stage when the child is still in its mother’s womb. As it grows up and interacts with its environment and learns the language of straddling the divide between thought and language.

Now in our country where over sixty percent of the population live in rural areas the environment the child finds itself in is typical Bengal culture and Bengali language (usually in dialect form). At a very early age the child has developed its private inner speech which it able to express coherently in Bengali.

By the age of three or four the link between the mental faculties and language is established. So it is only natural progression to further its intellect through the medium of Bengali. So it follows that when the child enters school the medium of teaching ought to be in Bengali; English, Palli and other languages can to taught as second language(s). Palli in fact would be a complement. Science and technology is not the sole prerogative of the west. I would refer the reader to reader Sri Dharampal’s “Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century” (you can download the pdf version of the book here: [Indian Science and Technology – Dharampal](#))

It’s only then, when the medium of teaching is in Bengali language, does a Bengali realize his mental faculties to the full.

However, since Bengali language is limited to Bengal, access to developments in sciences and technologies by foreign countries is extremely limited. We cannot progress unless we cannot have such access.

The following two steps seem to be in order;

1. Teaching English from schools as second language.
2. Translating all relevant books, magazines, etc. available in English (and also some other languages) into Bengali. This is a herculean task but achievable. We have hundreds of doctorates, and many instances double doctorates, who are fluent, both written and speech, in both Bengali and English. Their expertise would be better utilized in translating for this purpose.

I am absolutely sure there are many latent scientists amongst the population whose deficiency in English language has held them back to contributing to progress of our country. Availability of scientific books to the masses would accelerate the technological advancement of the whole country.